WARWICKSHIRE

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WARWICKSHIRE

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WARWICK CASTLE FROM THE BRIDGE.

WARWICK-SHIRE

THE LAND OF SHAKESPEARE

PAINTED BY

FRED WHITEHEAD

DESCRIBED BY

CLIVE HOLLAND

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Preface to Revised Edition

To those who know Warwickshire well it will be unnecessary to either sing its praises, as not only one of the most historic but also one of the most fascinating of middle-England shires, or to urge its claims for the consideration of those who love the fair, open country, winding roads, and pleasant hills and vales. This county, of whose beauty poets from almost time immemorial have sung, possesses an added interest beyond the romantic elements afforded by its history, its magnificent survivals of bygone ages in castles, manor-houses, churches, and other domestic buildings, in that it is the land of Shakespeare. Around this beautiful district of England still hangs some of the unfading glamour which comes from the association with it of great deeds and great names ; from amongst the latter of which that of "the nation's poet" stands out with undimmed lustre as the centuries pass away.

The wealth of material which confronts both the writer and the artist who seeks to depict with pen and brush some of the most salient features of the county is so embarrassing that selection becomes a task of

extreme difficulty. What to leave out presents itself as a most pressing problem, not easily solved; for, alas! space is not elastic; and even when the question is in a measure disposed of, it is still pregnant with regrets for the many beautiful things, historic places, scenes, and incidents which have had to be omitted for lack of space. To those who know the county only as one of England's central shires, perhaps the book may give sufficient pleasure to induce them to visit the places described.

C. H.

EALING, W.5.
June 1922.

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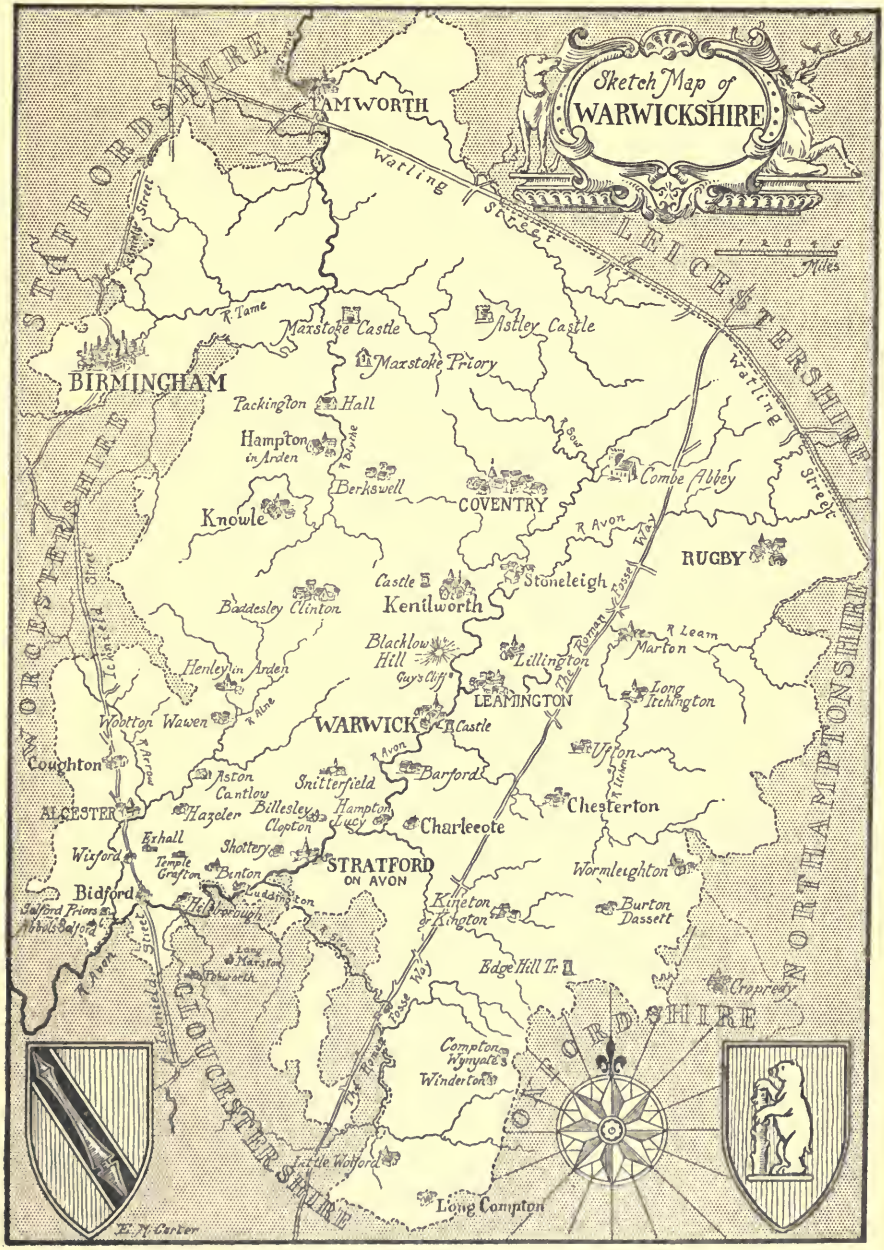

SKETCH MAP OF WARWICKSHIRE.

WARWICKSHIRE

CHAPTER I

WARWICKSHIRE AND ITS HISTORY FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Warwickshire has rightly been termed "leafy Warwickshire," for although deficient in scenery cast in a large mould, which may be described as grand or magnificent, it is undoubtedly one of the most lovely of English counties. Though lacking the peaks and deep-set dales of its near neighbour, Derbyshire, which it touches at its northern limit, it is essentially a county of pleasant hills, uplands, and fertile well-watered vales. Some of the richest meadow-land and most picturesque woodland scenery in the Midlands lie within the confine of Shakespeare's shire.

Few English counties present greater attractions for the student of the past, the archæologist, the rambler, and the tourist than Warwickshire. Through it gently-flowing rivers, unagitated by sudden drops from highland sources, pass on their placid ways by rich pasture-land and fields of waving corn, or wind in tortuous convolutions through widespread parks, and past historic castles and mansions rich in traditions of

the stirring times when the shire played its part in the affairs of national history.

Warwickshire, although possessing few ranges of considerable hills, and no very high eminences, the chief ranges being on its north, eastern and south-eastern borders, has just that type of scenery which was so delightfully described by Mrs. Browning in "Aurora Leigh" :—

> The ground's most gentle dimplement
> (as if God's finger touched, but did not press,
> In making England !), such an up and down
> Of verdure—nothing too much up or down ;
> A ripple of land ; such little hills, the sky
> Can stoop to tenderly and the wheat fields climb ;
> Such nooks and valleys, lined with orchises,
> Fed full of noises by invisible streams ;
> And open pastures, where you scarcely tell
> White daisies from white dew ; at intervals
> The mythic oaks and elm trees standing out
> Self-poised upon their prodigy of shade—
> I thought my father's land was worthy too
> Of being my Shakespeare's.

Few better descriptions of the charms of this delightful county have ever been written, although many poets have sung them. An Elizabethan singer, Michael Drayton, said of his native shire, "We the heart of England well may call."

It was well, indeed, for English literature that such an one as the Bard of Avon should have been born and have lived in this land of pleasant pastures, leafy woodlands, and placid and beautiful streams, and should have treasured early memories of vagrant days amid

her sylvan solitudes and river banks with which to gem his after work with sweet imageries of rural beauties, of flowers, and the songs of birds.

Shakespeare loved his native town, and he put into almost all of his plays some glimpses or description of the natural and unfailing beauties of Stratford and its immediate surroundings. And still, in the meadows in which long ago he loved to muse and wander, are found those "daisies pied," "pansies that are for thoughts," the "blue-veined violets," and "ladies' smocks all silver white," of which Shakespeare's maidens often sing. And there are also the willow-hung brooks, and the orchards in spring beauteous in white and pink blossom, and in autumn rich with sun-kissed fruit.

In few parts of rural England are richer and more beautiful meadows to be found than round Stratford. These, through which the placid-moving Avon flows, are in spring and early summer gay with the glistening gold of kingcups and humbler buttercups, and fragrant with meadowsweet. And a little later on the meadow grass is shot and diapered with mauve orchises, tall horse daisies, yellow rattlegrass, blue and white milk-wort, and frail bluebells. In the woodlands, which engirdle Stratford a little way beyond the town, there is in spring a rich carpet of the mingled yellow of prim-roses and vivid ultramarine of wild hyacinths, and a blended odour of awakening earth and flowers. Few counties have been better sung by poets of the past and present than Warwickshire. And much verse

which has never been traced to Warwickshire writers doubtless owes its origin to a district which, "beautiful as some dreamland of flowers and fruits, and kingdom of elfish people," is taken to the heart of all who sojourn within its borders, be it only for a brief period.

Beautiful, however, as the county is, it has interests quite as fascinating for the historian, student, and archæologist as for the wayfarer and artist. There is, indeed, no lack of historical associations and of famous houses, connected with which are many of the traditions and gallant deeds of past ages, which give an added interest to much that is beautiful in itself.

The history of Warwickshire contains much which is also that of England. Its life throughout the varying ages has been a part of that of the kingdom at large. Although the traces of the earliest of all inhabitants are comparatively few, sufficient exist, or have been discovered from time to time, to enable both historical and archæological students to construct with some certainty the life of the district in far remote times.

Of the history of Warwickshire in pre-Roman times unfortunately little is known. Even the very name of the county itself is of obscure origin, although it most probably has a distinct connection with that of the tribe Hwicci, who, in common with another tribe, the Cornavii, dwelt in the district, which was a part of the great central kingdom of Mercia, before the Roman occupation.

Of the Roman occupation, which lasted nearly 470 years, fortunately many memorials and relics have sur-

HENLEY-IN-ARDEN.

vived. Traces of three of those great highways which exerted so puissant a civilising influence whilst Romans dwelt in Britain, are still to be seen in the portions of the Icknield-Way, Watling Street, and the Fosse-Way, which are to be found in different parts of the county. Indeed, the second of these has given its name to one of Birmingham's most important streets. Along a portion of the county's western border, too, runs the Ridgeway; and Alcester, Mancetter, and many other spots were once Roman stations or Roman encampments. But although the Roman occupation doubtless affected Warwickshire with the rest of the kingdom, it was of a more partial character than in many other districts, and appears to have been largely confined to the immediate vicinity of the roads which the invaders constructed. The character of the country, which was at that time densely wooded, permitted the inhabitants to hold it against their conquerors with some success, attacking when the opportunity served, and then retiring into ambush afforded by the nature of the ground.

Details of the early years of the Roman Conquest are fragmentary, and it is not, indeed, till about A.D. 50 that one finds Ostorius Scapula, who was the second governor, erecting a string of military posts and forts on the Severn, indicating at all events the partial subjugation of the British. Ultimately the district of which Warwickshire formed a part became incorporated in the province known by the name of Flavia Cæsariensis, and latterly was called Britannia Secunda.

Comparatively few architectural traces of the days

of Roman rule have been found, and of these most have been upon the lines of the two great roads, the Icknield-Way and Watling Street, and then chiefly in the immediate vicinity of the camps or "stations." Very little history, too, relating to this interesting period has survived the effluxion of time.

The immediate successor of Ostorius appears to have made terms with the leaders of the Hwicci, granting to them certain concessions, and some measure of independence, but these British chiefs later on joined with the Silures in resisting the Romans, and an era of greater severity on the part of the latter ensued.

Under Suetonius Paulinus the domination over this portion of Britain was extended and ultimately rendered complete. At this period "Arden," which is the general Celtic name for a forest, was to all intents Warwickshire. It certainly was the largest of all British forests, and extended from the Avon as far northward as the Trent, and probably stretched to the banks of the Severn on the west. Its eastern boundary is more uncertain, but there appears considerable reason for believing that it lay approximately along a line drawn from the town of Burton-on-Trent to High Cross, where the Fosse-Way and Watling Street intersect. The early inhabitants of the southern portion of this thickly-wooded and well-timbered district were principally if not entirely belonging to the tribe of herdsmen known as the Hwiccian Ceangi, and this district of Arden was known as the "Feldon," whilst the northern portion of the county beyond the Avon

was then known as the Woodland. The first-named district was of the nature of more open country, with pasture lands and possessing wide cultivated areas, although well-wooded in places; whilst the second named was thickly timbered and scarcely penetrated to any extent by the Roman conquerors. In later times, when England was ultimately divided into shires or counties, in those of Warwick and Stafford were incorporated various portions of the wilder Arden of those ancient days. The name is, however, now only preserved in Warwickshire, where it survives in Hampton-in-Arden and Henley-in-Arden, situated in the Woodland district.

Partial as the subjection to the Roman yoke of what is now known as Warwickshire undoubtedly was, considerable remains of the occupation have from time to time been discovered in the shape of coins, implements, pottery, and other antiquities at Warwick, Alcester, Lapworth, Hampton-in-Arden, Milverton, Birmingham, and other places.

The departure of the Romans affected Warwickshire less than some other portions of the country at first. But there is little doubt that the usual policy of the conquerors of drafting the bravest, best, and youngest men into their own legions for service abroad left "the heart of England" as badly prepared to resist the invasion of other tribes as was the rest of the country. Depleted of many of its bravest warriors, England was, after several centuries of reliance upon an alien power for defence, when the Roman con-

querors departed left at the mercy of any who chose to attack. Not only were all the legions required at home to resist the Saxon invasion under Alaric, who poured his hosts of barbarians over the wide-spread Roman Empire, but the British youth who had been drafted abroad returned not, and thus, as Gildas says, Britain, despoiled of her soldiers, arms, and youth, who had followed Maximus to return no more to their native shores, and being ignorant of the art of war, groaned for many years under the constant incursions and ruthlessness of the Picts and Scots.

For some considerable period after the departure of the Romans few historical records relating to Warwickshire exist. And if, as George Eliot wrote in *The Mill on the Floss*, "the happiest nations have no history," then the county which gave her and the "Bard of Avon" birth must have been a pleasant spot for a long period. There is probably a reasonable explanation of this circumstance when its position is considered. Situated in the centre of England, and far removed from the seaboard, it naturally escaped much of the storm and stress of invasion and attack from which less happily placed districts in those wild, early periods of national history so constantly suffered. Except for a record that one Credda, a Saxon commander of note, successfully penetrated into the wooded solitudes of Warwickshire, there are few data obtainable for the construction of an historic sketch of this region until the time of the Saxon Heptarchy. Then it became a part and parcel of the wide-spread kingdom

SALFORD PRIORS.

of Mercia, and not only enjoyed a share of its rule and barbaric pomp and circumstance, but also played a not inconsiderable part in the wars and feuds of the various Mercian rulers.

The capital of several of these monarchs was Tamworth; which anciently enjoyed the distinction of standing in both Staffordshire and Warwick, concerning which the Saxon Chronicle of 913 records, "This year, by the help of God, Æthelflæd, lady of the Mercians, went with all the Mercians to Tamworth, and there builded a burgh early in the summer." In those times Kingsbury, on the Tame, was also a place of importance as a royal residence, and, according to Dugdale, the farmhouse, formerly the Hall, stands on the spot where stood the palace of the Mercian kings. Tamworth was destined to play its part in one of those fierce and lurid conflicts between the Saxons and the Danish invaders which took place after the town had been burned by the latter. Near by, too, in A.D. 757, another battle took place between Ethelbald, the tenth king of Mercia, and Cuthred, King of the West Saxons, when the former was slain by one of his own followers. At Seckington, about five miles to the north-east of Tamworth, is a tumulus, which not only marks the site of the battle, but also the burial-place of those who fell.

In the latter half of the eighth century Offa, who ultimately became the greatest ruler of the West of those times, raised the kingdom of Mercia to a height of greatness and prosperity that it had never before

enjoyed,—an importance which it continued to hold for a period under the rule of his son Cenwulf. Warwickshire, as a part of Mercia, must naturally have benefited by its greatness and progress, but during the reign of Cenwulf the seeds of a far-reaching revolution were being sown, the fruits of which were the uniting of the kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia by Ecgberht or Egbert, King of the West Saxons, who has been sometimes incorrectly described as the first king of England.

The incursions of the Danish invaders, which had been of frequent occurrence prior to the reign of Egbert, assumed a much more formidable aspect almost ere the King had succeeded in welding together the separate kingdoms under one head. Their first unwelcome visitations had begun in 787, some thirteen years before Egbert's accession.

In 868 they once again invaded and seriously ravaged Mercia. Two years later they conquered East Anglia. A year later their triumphant progress extended into Wessex, where they at first achieved some successes, although that kingdom was ruled by a wise and heroic ruler in the person of Æthelred, the brother of Alfred the Great, who succeeded him. In the following year, 871, no less than nine pitched battles were fought between the Danes and the Saxons.

It is supposed that Mercia about this time was only a portion of the kingdom of Burhred, the last native king of central England, who had succeeded Ceolwulf. This in 874 had been divided by the victorious Danes, and committed as a tributary state to Ceolwulf.

Be this as it may, the whole of Warwickshire, there is little reason to doubt, came into the hands of Alfred the Great by the Treaty of Wedmore in 878, made between him and Guthrun the Danish leader, and was ultimately formed by him into a duchy under his daughter Æthelflæd and her husband Æthelred.

The effects of the Danish settlement were important on the future history of the kingdom, for it was that of a new people with different customs, modes of life, and traditions. How far-reaching the occupation was can be traced in local nomenclature, and the counties which were anciently West Saxon still retain the names and boundaries of the divisions founded by the successors of Cerdic. Mercia, in contradistinction to the local divisions of Wessex, which were evolved naturally, was apparently mapped out, and the extent of the Danish settlement of the county of Warwick may be traced from the fact that Rugby is the southernmost town possessing the Danish affix *by*, whilst there are a considerable number of places so distinguished in the more northern part of the county.

In the several massacres of the Danes which took place during the period comprised by the last few years of the tenth and first years of the eleventh centuries, the part played by Mercia, and, as a consequence, by the district afterwards to be known as Warwickshire, was considerable. The ultimate vengeance for these massacres, which was taken by Swend in 1013, was shared by the Mercians as well as by the other inhabitants of East Anglia and central England. And

the coming of Canute three years later was destined to have a far-reaching effect upon the history of the district, and of England generally.

Arriving with his army and Eadric, the Saxon Earldorman, who had betrayed his fellow-countrymen previously, and had, so the Chronicles state, fled from England to escape their vengeance, Canute crossed the Thames at Cricklade and entered and ravaged Mercia, proceeding into Warwickshire during mid-winter's tide, where the Danes ravaged and burned and slew all that they could come across. Afterwards Canute and his forces besieged London. "But," says the Chronicler, "Almighty God saved it." Failing to capture the city, the Danes once more returned into Mercia, and carried fire and sword into its vales and woodlands, slaying and burning whatever they overran.

On the death of Æthelred the Unready two years later, in 1016, Canute was chosen king at Southampton, and Edmund, surnamed Ironside, in London. The latter's reign was short but glorious; several battles were fought with the Danes and victories won, in consequence of which Canute agreed to a division of the kingdom between Edmund and himself. In this division Canute took Mercia and Northumbria, and Edmund the rest of England. In a few months the latter died in London, and Canute became by common consent King of England.

The Danish leader's reign brought peace and a large degree of prosperity for the people over whom he had been destined to rule. And during his sovereignty

Warwickshire at least experienced immunity from ravishment by fire and sword, and enjoyed a measure of good government. In the years which immediately followed little happened to disturb the peace of the county, although bloody feuds occasionally wrought destruction in contiguous localities.

With the death of Edward the Confessor a brief period of unrest ensued, whilst Harold was engaged in a struggle to retain the throne he had ascended and in resisting the invasion of William of Normandy, who claimed that the crown of England had been left him by Edward the Confessor.

In the fierce Battle of Hastings, waged on the heights of Sussex, Harold fell fighting, and with him ended the history of the country under its Anglo-Saxon kings.

Under them England had gained a foretaste of those principles of individual and personal liberty, in comparison with which all other so-called freedom can be but a mockery.

The extent of the occupation of Warwickshire by the Saxons can be easily traced by the curious from the number of *marks*, as their early settlements were called. Thirty-one of the large number of thirteen hundred and twenty-nine names of settlements, which have been traced throughout the land, belong to Warwickshire. Some few of the most notable were Leamingas (Leamington), Beormingas (Birmingham), Ludingas (Luddington), Whittingas (Whittington), Poeccingas (Packington), Ælmingas (Almington), Secingas (Seckington), and Eardingas (Erdington).

Warwickshire

Warwickshire is not possessed of many Saxon remains. Of architecture dating from before the Conquest the fragments of round-headed door cases at Kenilworth, Stretton-on-Dunsmoor, Ryton, Honingham, Badgeley, and Burton Dassett may be mentioned. While at Polesworth nunnery, the ruins of Merevale Abbey, and in the churches at Salford Priors and Beaudesert there are some fragments. Occasionally Saxon jewels have been turned up in the soil. Perhaps amongst the most interesting of these relics are the two Saxon jewels of cut gold, one set with an opal and rubies, and the other adorned on both sides with a cross between two rudely-fashioned human figures, each holding a lance or sword in one hand, found more than a century and a quarter ago at Walton Hall, near Compton Verney. Tumuli, of course, exist in different parts of the country, from which at various times bones, skulls, and small ornaments have been excavated.

Until the coming of William the Conqueror Warwickshire was almost without historians or records, although an attempt at a survey and the accumulation of historical data had been made in the previous reign of Edward the Confessor. Though the Saxon Chronicle gives many interesting and valuable details concerning lands, places, and incidentally also of the life of the people of the period, it is to the Domesday Book, that monumental work of the Conqueror, all historians and students have to go when in search of information regarding the English counties at the time of, immediately prior to, and after the Conquest. The value

of this truly wonderful work as regards Warwickshire in particular is considerably enhanced by reason of its containing a comparative report of the nature, extent, and value of the different estates, names of towns, and position of roads in the reign of Edward the Confessor. From its pages one is enabled to gain a more or less vivid idea of the extent of the county, its inhabitants, and its peculiarities at a time when English history and that of Warwickshire was in the making.

In this wonderful work, commenced in 1081 and completed in 1086, are to be found records of all the original Saxon landowners (many of whom were afterwards dispossessed by their conquerors), and the value and extent of their estates. The original holders of the Saxon manors and estates in Warwickshire suffered severely at the hands of the Norman invader ; and the pages of the Domesday Book afford interesting evidence of how wide-spread these confiscations were. The population of the county at that time was a few less than seven thousand, all told.

The period immediately succeeding the Conquest was one of great suffering for the vanquished. Year after year the Saxon Chronicle sets down a tale of wars, pestilences, storms, and famines, and although there is no direct reference to Warwickshire, it is certain that the county bore its part in "the sufferings inflicted by the acts of tyrannous man and the wisdom of God."

From the tangle of the history of this period it is no easy task to seek to justly estimate the part played by Warwickshire in the history of the country at large.

But towards the end of Henry III.'s reign it was the scene of some of the most stirring and momentous episodes of the Barons' War. The struggle between the King and the Barons under the leadership of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, centred, so far as Warwickshire was concerned, round Kenilworth and Warwick. De Montfort at the outset of the war garrisoned the former castle and placed Sir John Gifford in command. The latter and the troops of the garrison promptly ravaged the country round about, destroying the manor-houses and farms of those who were well-affected to the King. And finding that the Earl of Warwick had espoused the Royal cause the Kenilworth garrison, under the leadership of its governor, surprised and made a vigorous attack upon Warwick, taking the Earl and Countess prisoners.

In the year following the Battle of Lewes was fought, on May 14, 1264, in which the Barons under De Montfort were victorious. Prince Edward and his troops afterwards made a forced march and appeared before Kenilworth and routed De Montfort and dispersed his force. De Montfort took refuge in the castle, and ultimately effected his escape. With the small force at his command Prince Edward felt unable to successfully attack a fortress of such strength, but in a skirmish hard by he succeeded in capturing much booty, and no less than fifteen of the Barons' standards, which were destined a short time later to prove of peculiar service to the victor.

Abandoning all intention of reducing Kenilworth

COUGHTON COURT.

Castle Edward and his troops pushed on their way towards Evesham, just over the border, in the neighbouring county of Worcestershire, bearing the captured standards in the van. At Evesham lay the Earl of Leicester, awaiting his son De Montfort, who, at the time of his defeat near Kenilworth by Prince Edward, had been on his way to join the Earl, then in Wales. Deceived by the standards the forces of the Barons prepared not to resist the advancing army, but to welcome it, under the mistaken impression that the force was that of their expected friends.

After the fierce engagement, fought on a torrid August day in 1265, on the high ground known as Green Hill, between the roads to Birmingham and Worcester, and about a mile outside the town, in which not only was the Earl of Leicester, Henry de Montfort and many nobles slain, but the power of the Barons finally broken, Simon de Montfort, who had escaped, fled to Kenilworth and afterwards to France.

After the conclusion of the Barons' war, for almost two centuries this most lovely of English counties rested in the tranquillity which during that period marked the years as they passed in central England, whatever happenings fell to dwellers on the coasts.

Only the merest echoes of the French wars of Edward III. and the glorious victories of Crecy and Poitiers seem to have reached the peaceful vales of Warwickshire ; though old Records and Chronicles bear witness that the country contributed of her money

and her sons to uphold the might of England. And the same may be said of the brave doings at Agincourt, Crevant, Verneuil, and Herrings; and the defeat sustained at Patay which counted for so much in the future history of the race. At most the disturbing influence of these wars was represented by the rumours, which travelled not fast in those times, the visits of the recruiting officers of the day, the appeal for followers made by some manorial lord, or the breathless tales told by returned wounded, or veterans from the "stricken fields" of fair France.

The religious life of the county was, as in other parts of England at this time, ministered to by the monks of foundations, such as Warwick Priory; Stoneleigh Abbey, a Cistercian monastery founded by the monks of Radmore, Staffordshire, who relinquished their estates in that county to Henry II. in exchange for those of Stoneleigh; Temple Balsall, near Knowle, erected by the Knights Templars in the reign of Richard II.; Combe Abbey, near Coventry, the second Cistercian foundation in the county, built in the reign of Stephen; Merevale Abbey, near Atherston, founded and richly endowed by Robert, Earl Ferrers, in the middle of the twelfth century in one of the most beautiful spots in the northern part of the county; and the once magnificent Maxstoke Priory, built in 1336 by William de Clinton for an establishment of the Augustines. From these and other religious houses emanated what of learning and religion the country-folk knew in the Middle Ages, and with the passing

away of the monkish owners at the time of the Dissolution, although abuses had undoubtedly crept in which called loudly for and needed stringent action and redress, Warwickshire was the poorer. It was to the monasteries and religious orders, rightly or wrongly, that the humble folk had looked for salvation, protection, and healing in the ancient days when almost all learning as well as knowledge of physic was to be found within cloistered walls.

With the accession of Henry VI. of Winchester, weak and totally unfitted to govern during the turbulent times which lay in the immediate future, trouble soon manifested itself amongst the powerful nobles; these the King proved quite unable to reduce to order. To make matters worse nearly the whole of the vast possessions held by England in France, which had been won by the triumphant arms of Henry V., were lost, adding to the bitterness and discontent which already was bringing the country at large to a state bordering upon anarchy. The serious family quarrels which had commenced whilst the King was still a minor, involving many of the noble houses, either in support of the claims of the House of York or the House of Lancaster, became acute. Shakespeare, in "Henry VI.," well and vividly pictures the historic scene in the Temple Gardens, in front of which in those days flowed a "clear, reed-begirt Thames," which was destined to give the coming contest its name, and describes the quarrel between the Earl of Somerset and Richard Plantagenet. The Earl of Warwick,

whilst in the company of the latter, by tradition is stated to have plucked a white rose, which was afterwards adopted as the badge of the Yorkists, and whilst doing so he makes the following speech :—

> This blot that they object against your house
> Shall be wiped out in the next parliament,
> Call'd for the truce of Winchester and Gloster ;
> And, if thou be not then created York,
> I will not live to be accounted Warwick.
> Meantime, in signal of my love for thee,
> Against proud Somerset and William Pole,
> Will I upon thy party wear this rose :
> And here I prophesy,—This brawl to-day,
> Grown to this faction, in the Temple Garden,
> Shall send, between the red rose and the white,
> A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

In the bloody struggle, which lasted intermittently for a period of thirty years, and was foreshadowed so accurately by Warwick's speech, his own county was destined to play a far more intimate and important rôle than many other parts of England where, indeed, the battle royal between the houses of York and Lancaster was regarded with comparatively slight interest. With the final rupture of the parties, which took place in 1455, Warwickshire entered upon another period of unrest, such as had afflicted its peace, progress, and prosperity during the Barons' War.

The struggle was possibly rendered the more disastrous from the fact that the county was divided in opinion regarding the merits of the "rival Roses." The supporters of the House of York numbered many

of the most powerful families in Warwickshire, in addition to that of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, destined to go down to posterity as "the King Maker." But while the town of Warwick was for York, this advantage was somewhat counterbalanced by the strong Lancastrian sympathies of Coventry, but twelve miles distant.

Henry of Lancaster and his Queen, Margaret, had sedulously wooed the latter town by frequent visits, and also by making it and several adjoining parishes a separate county. Coventry saw a good deal of the Red Rose faction, and at the re-commencement of the war, which had languished after the first battle of St. Albans in 1455, at the time the Earls of Warwick and March (the latter of whom was afterwards made Edward IV.) set out for London in search of the King's forces, the Lancastrians were actually quartered at Coventry. The troops, however, did not remain long in the town, but marching south-east under the command of the Duke of Buckingham, encountered the Yorkist forces at Northampton on July 10, 1460, suffering a disastrous defeat, when Henry himself was captured. Amongst the more notable Warwickshire adherents of the King who fell was Sir Henry Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford-on-Avon.

Ten years later saw Warwick "the King Maker" espousing the cause of Lancaster. After his quarrel with Edward IV. he had fled to France, and there at the Court of Louis XI. had met with and been reconciled to Margaret, and exiled Queen of Henry VI. of

Windsor, and Edward's own brother the Duke of Clarence. In the same year (1470) Warwick and Clarence made a descent upon England, and Edward fled to Flanders. On the landing of Warwick, Henry VI., who although deposed was still alive, was proclaimed; and for a short period the Lancastrian dynasty may be said to have been restored.

On the return of Edward in the following year the Earl of Warwick took the field at the head of the Lancastrian forces. He was not long destined, however, to profit by his change of sides, for, encountering the army which Edward, who had been rejoined by the Duke of Clarence, had hastily gathered together at Barnet, "the King Maker" was utterly defeated and slain on April 14, 1471. The landing of Margaret, which had taken place at Weymouth on the same day, caused the Lancastrian forces to rally after the battle of Barnet, but they were finally overthrown on May 4 at Tewkesbury, after which Edward, son of Henry and Margaret, was treacherously assassinated by the King and his brother; and the Duke of Somerset, who had been captured, executed.

With the defeat and death of "the King Maker" Warwickshire's active participation in the struggles of the rival Roses may be said to have come to an end.

A few years later the House of Warwick became allied to that of York by the marriage of Richard III. with Anne, daughter of the Earl of Warwick, and widow of the unhappy Edward V., who had been murdered by Richard, his uncle.

Perkin Warbeck

The final struggle between the rival Roses took place not in Warwickshire, but in its sister county Leicestershire at Market Bosworth, in the sanguinary battle of August 22, 1485, which by the defeat and death of Richard III. brought the Plantagenet line of English sovereigns to an end.

Upon the accession of Henry of Richmond after the battle of Bosworth, the Earl of Warwick, son of the Duke of Clarence, was imprisoned in the Tower. And on the advent of Perkin Warbeck, who represented himself to be Richard, Duke of York, son of Edward IV., the fact of Warwick's imprisonment was used by King Henry VII.'s enemies to his injury and disparagement.

The fate of Warbeck was destined ultimately to involve that of the unfortunate Earl of Warwick. Bacon puts the position in a brief phrase, which cannot be easily surpassed for vivid imagery. He says, "it was ordained that the winding ivy of a Plantagenet should kill the true tree itself."

By the execution of the Earl upon Tower Hill in 1499 the male line of the Plantagenets, which had flourished in great royalty, power, and renown from the time of Henry II., came to an end ; and there was no other Earl of Warwick for a period of nearly half a century.

CHAPTER II

WARWICKSHIRE AND ITS HISTORY FROM THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY TO MODERN TIMES

For many years after the decisive battle of Bosworth the history of Warwickshire was marked rather by peaceful and steady progress than by events of intense interest. No great occurrence of a military or catastrophic character disturbed its sunny hills and fertile vales. And even during the reign of Edward VI., which witnessed the historical struggle between the Duke of Somerset and Earl of Warwick for power, Warwickshire enjoyed a period of rest and tranquillity, unaffected by the schemes and plotting of John Dudley, who had been created Earl of Warwick by the King.

On the death of Edward VI., however, the county became involved in the attempt of Warwick, who had been made Duke of Northumberland, to place Lady Jane Grey, who had just married his son Lord Guildford Dudley, on the throne to the exclusion of Mary, half-sister of the late King. The attempt completely failed and resulted in Warwick's execution as a traitor on Tower Hill on August 22, 1553, his death being followed the next year by that of the unfortunate

DUNCHURCH.

lady who had been made the innocent instrument of his over-weening ambition.

During Mary's reign Warwick's grandson, Ambrose, was restored to favour, and although the county was involved in the rising of the Duke of Suffolk and Sir Thomas Wyatt in February 1554 to depose the Queen and prevent her marriage with Philip of Spain, the House of Warwick was not concerned in the rebellion, which was speedily quashed.

Warwickshire was not permitted to escape the cruelties and persecutions which distinguished the disastrous reign of Mary, and among the historical memories which the county should for ever honour and cherish with undying love are those of the martyrdom of Robert Glover and Mrs. Joyce Lewis, both of Mancetter, and of others; the former of whom was burned at the stake in Coventry on September 19, 1555, in company with Cornelias Bungey.

In the succeeding reign of Elizabeth the county had its part in the general progress and prosperity of the nation at large. The fear of the threatened Armada of 1585 found Warwickshire, as other counties, ready and willing to furnish its quota of men and money for the defence of England. And as the time of danger drew nearer and the designs of Philip of Spain became a reality, the numbers of the levies made in the county increased, until in December 1587 the Lord-Lieutenant received orders from the Queen to provide 600 men, properly selected and equipped. Large loans were also successfully raised,

although from the State Papers one gathers that there were a considerable number of families, probably Catholics, who objected to contribute. One great happening only in the county marked this period as one destined to be ultimately regarded as of world-wide interest and importance. On April 23, 1564, at Stratford-on-Avon, William Shakespeare, one of the greatest poets of any age, was born. A genius not alone destined to reflect undying lustre upon the literature of the wonderfully rich Elizabethan age, but to survive through succeeding centuries of change in men, modes of thought and fashion as no other writer has.

Rather less than half a century after Shakespeare's birth the county was once more brought into prominence by the famous Gunpowder Plot. Not only were many of the chief conspirators members of well-known Warwickshire families, but much of the plotting took place in the county. The conspiracy, which was intended to compass the death of King James and his eldest son Prince Henry, and other Protestant noblemen on the opening of the Parliament in November 1605, was in the beginning largely the work of one Robert Catesby, of Bushwood Hall, near Lapworth. Catesby had taken part in the abortive rebellion of the Earl of Essex in the previous reign, but had been pardoned after having paid a fine amounting to £3000. He would appear to have been "the born plotter" he was called by an historian of the period, for he was mixed up in numerous conspiracies previous to the "gun-

powder treason," which cost him his life. At one time he was probably a Protestant, as he married a daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh, of Stoneleigh Abbey.

Catesby and his fellow conspirators, in addition to compassing the death of King James and the heir to the throne, proposed to seize the person of Prince Charles or that of the Princess Elizabeth, then living at Combe Abbey, near Coventry, which had been but recently erected by Lord Harrington. The ultimate intention being to marry the Princess to some Catholic nobleman. Catesby's mother was a Roman Catholic, a Miss Throckmorton of Coughton Court, near Alcester. His father, originally a Protestant, had been frequently brought to book and fined for recusancy. It was probably the persecution of his father that turned Robert Catesby's undoubted gifts for plotting into the channel of the famous Gunpowder Conspiracy. He at first associated himself with three desperadoes, and ultimately with Guido Fawkes. The plotters met to arrange the details of their plan chiefly at Bushwood, Clopton, Coughton Court, and the ancient manor-house of Norbrook, not far from Warwick, the home of John Grant, one of the chief conspirators. This latter place was the magazine where the arms were stored, and also a general rendezvous, but the headquarters were the Lion Inn, at Dunchurch.

At this time Catesby himself was residing at Ashby St. Ledgers, Northamptonshire, after he had sold his Warwickshire estates. The plan was to have a hunting match at Dunsmore, near Dunchurch, and then the

conspirators, on receiving the news that Guido Fawkes' portion of the work had been faithfully accomplished, and the Houses of Parliament blown up, were to ride off to Combe Abbey and seize the person of the Princess Elizabeth.

On the 5th of November there was a large muster of people—invited by Sir Everard Digby, whose part in the plot it was to bring about a "rising" in the Midlands—concerned at Dunchurch, ostensibly for a hunting party. All day they hung about the street of the little town, or sat in the parlour of the low-gabled Lion Inn, hungering for news. Towards midnight these were thrown into a panic by the arrival of Catesby, Rokewood, Percy, the Wrights, and others who had fled from London on the arrest of Guido Fawkes the night before, whilst he was at work in the vaults beneath the Houses of Parliament laying the train that was to explode the gunpowder on the following day.

The principal conspirators, who, instead of fleeing the country on Fawkes' arrest, had proceeded post-haste to Dunchurch, in the hope of still seizing the Princess and raising a rebellion in her name, on reaching the village decided to continue their flight, with others who joined them, on the news of the failure of the plot.

It was ultimately decided to make a stand at Holbeach House, Staffordshire, the residence of Stephen Littleton, who had only recently joined the conspiracy. To reach it they had to ford a river, and in doing so their arms and ammunition became damp. Whilst drying the powder in front of the fire a spark fell

amongst it; an explosion occurred, and Catesby, Morgan, Rokewood, and Grant were badly burned; and several of those who had thrown in their lot with the fugitives took advantage of the confusion to escape.

On the arrival of the sheriff of Worcestershire and his posse at Holbeach, the house—which had been seriously damaged by the explosion—was attacked, and Catesby and Percy, a member of the Northumberland family, were shot in the courtyard, where they had intentionally exposed themselves. Rokewood was severely wounded and taken prisoner with Winter, Grant, Morgan, and several less known plotters who had retreated into the house. Others were afterwards taken whilst hiding in the cover afforded by Snitterfield Bushes, some six or seven miles to the south-west of Warwick.

Thus ended one of the most notable conspiracies in English history, the heinousness of which has been the subject of much controversy both in the period immediately following its failure and in recent times. With the capture and death of the chief participants, and the ultimate trial and punishment of those who had not succeeded in making good their escape, Warwickshire once more relapsed into its normal condition of peace and quietude, from which it was, however, destined to be rudely awakened by the yet more stirring events of the great Civil War.

At the outbreak of the struggle between Charles I. and his parliament the county generally declared itself

strongly on the side of the latter ; the then owner of Warwick Castle, Robert Greville, Lord Brooke, being one of the most powerful and bitter of the early opponents of the King. Prominent upon the side of Charles, however, was found Sir William Dugdale of Blythe Hall, the antiquary and historian, who, holding office as one of the royal heralds and as Garter King-at-Arms, journeyed with the King to Nottingham and made the proclamation when the royal standard was set up on August 22, 1642. The disastrous Civil War may be said to have then begun, notwithstanding that two days previously a hot skirmish had taken place at Long Itchington, some ten miles to the east of Warwick, between the King's forces and those of the Parliament under Lord Brooke and Lord Grey.

Although the first serious encounter between the opposing parties took place in the neighbouring county of Worcester on September 23, when Prince Rupert gained an advantage over a body of Parliamentarian troops, what may be called the first battle of the war took place just a month later, a little to the south of Kineton, on the plain below Edge Hill, by which latter name the engagement is known.

Following hard upon the raising of the Royal standard at Nottingham, Lord Essex at the head of the Parliamentarian forces seized Worcester. About the middle of September the King and the army which had flocked to his standard marched to Shrewsbury, from which town on the 12th of the following month they set out for London. On the 18th of October Charles

was quartered at Packington Old Hall, the home of Sir Robert Fisher, about ten miles to the north-west of Coventry. On the 19th and 20th the Royal forces were at Kenilworth, next day at Southam, and on Saturday, 22nd, Charles was the guest of Mr. Toby Chauncy at Edgecote House, near Cropredy, just over the border in Oxfordshire ; whilst Prince Rupert and a body of troops were encamped a few miles to the north at Wormleighton House, the main body of the Royalist army being gathered at Edgecote and Cropredy.

Essex, who had left Worcester upon hearing of the Royalist move towards the capital, reached Kineton on the eve of the 22nd of October with a portion of his army, numbering about 13,000 foot and regular horse, with some 700 dragoons. He was thus numerically inferior to the Royalists, whose forces numbered about two thousand more foot. The intention of the Parliamentary leader was to rest his men on the following day (Sunday), so as to allow the remainder of his troops to come up with him. These consisted of two regiments of foot, eleven troops of horse, and seven pieces of ordnance.

The approach of Essex, the number of his forces and his intentions became known to Prince Rupert, through the pickets which he had judiciously stationed on the high ground at Burton Dassett. A hasty council of war was held at Cropredy, at which it was decided to attempt to check the Parliamentary advance, and to give Essex battle.

Throughout the night of Saturday October 22,

the whole district was astir with the movements of troops, the little town of Kineton, the Tysoe villages, Butler's Marston, Burton Dassett, Warmington, Cropredy, and Wormleighton being terror-struck with the massing of the rival forces and passage of swiftly-travelling messengers.

Almost before it was light the main body of the Royal army struck camp, and marched by way of Mollington and Warmington to a position on the Edge Hills extending from Edge Hill House on the south to Knowle End on the north, the King's standard being placed and displayed on the site now occupied by the Round Tower. The Royal Line was well protected both on its flanks and in the rear ; whilst a complete view of the Parliamentarian army, then disposed in three lines of battle on the plain below in front of the little town of Kineton, was obtainable, the ground in front of the Parliamentarians being even more "open" than it is at the present time.

There would appear to have been good hope on the Royalist side of a successful issue to the impending battle. The advantage of position certainly lay with Charles' troops. The King, after reconnoitring the enemy through a telescope from Knowle End, where now stands a crown-shaped mound planted with trees, rode along the lines of his army clad in steel, wearing a star and garter, and a black velvet mantle over his suit of armour. He afterwards addressed the officers, gathered in his tent for last instructions, in these words, "Come life or death, your King will bear you company."

SOUTHAM.

It was the Earl of Lindsey, the King's Lieutenant-General, who acted as impromptu chaplain and offered up a quaint and brief prayer in these words: "O Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be to-day! If I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me. March on, boys!"

Through that long Sunday morning, on October 23, 1642 (November 2, new style), the forces of Lord Essex lay and watched the enemy on the heights above them, and distant from them scarcely more than a couple of miles; showing no disposition to risk an attack upon a position which was undoubtedly so advantageous as to be worth several thousand men. At about one o'clock it was decided by the King and his officers to descend the steep face of the cliff, and make a frontal attack upon the Parliamentarians disposed in a long line passing through Battle and Thistle Farms. In Essex's own regiment commanding a troop was Oliver Cromwell, then forty-one, who was destined to ultimately crush the Royal cause on the fields of Marston Moor and Naseby.

Prince Rupert, who, earlier in the day, had caused embarrassment by his refusal to serve under orders save those of King Charles himself, led the cavalry on the right, Lord Wilmot on the left, whilst the command of the centre was vested in Sir Jacob Astley and General Ruthven, with the King and reserves of pensioners in the rear. Although the day was fine overhead the ground was wet and miry, and proved heavy "going" for troops already fatigued by several days of rapid marching. Close upon two o'clock the

muffled boom of two cannon fired by the Parliamentarians rolled across the plain and reverberated amid the cliffs of the Edge Hills. The momentous opening of the great Civil War had come.

The Royalists' cavalry on the left swept round, and charged upon the body of Parliamentarian troops located at what is now known as Battle Farm, where Essex had placed some of his artillery. They were repulsed with considerable loss. Prince Rupert's charge along the right wing met with more success as it drove back Sir James Ramsay and the force under his command. But unhappily for the King the Prince rushed onwards towards Kineton with characteristic heedlessness to plunder the Parliamentarian baggage train, unmindful of the fact that his help was needed, as the Royalists were losing ground on other parts of the field.

At this hour of the day, although the Parliamentary left was crumpled up and forced back, the right wing held its own, as did also the centre; and when Rupert returned from his impetuous pursuit, it was too late to retrieve his error of judgment. The enemy's centre had not only stood firm but had advanced, forcing the Royalists to retreat. The arrival of John Hampden, with a body of troops who promptly opened fire upon the Prince's horsemen, causing them to flee in great confusion, completed the disaster, Rupert himself having to throw away his hat and plumes lest they should offer a mark to the enemy's musketeers.

The Royal army was now indeed, for some considerable time, in imminent danger of a disastrous and

crushing defeat, owing to the severe pressure on its left front.

Both armies suffered severely, almost equally so, states a contemporary account, but inasmuch as the Parliamentarians had held their ground and the Royalists had been compelled to retire from the assault, the advantage was with some justness claimed by the former. The number of killed was very large, but contemporary estimates are so contradictory that it is almost impossible to obtain figures of any exactness. Probably Sir William Dugdale, who, present during the engagement, afterwards went over the field and estimated the number of those actually slain to have been rather more than 1100, is approximately correct.

Although the enclosures have altered the general appearance of the field of battle from that which it bore on that disastrous Sunday of October 23, 1642, the main lines can even nowadays be traced with considerable clearness and accuracy. And the "Sun Rising," a fine, old stone house, has survived the course of the years, as has also the old Beacon Tower, at Burton Dassett, on the summit of which the first signal fire was kindled in the cresset by the Parliamentarians to send the news of the battle London-wards to the next station at Ivinghoe, some forty miles distant, and thence to Harrow-on-the-Hill.

The months immediately succeeding the first struggle at Edge Hill saw some great happenings. Warwick had held out when called upon by Sir William Dugdale to surrender in the King's name, though

Banbury yielded. But at Coventry the anti-Royalist faction was all powerful, the "rebels," "sectaries," and "schismatics" gathered thick within its walls, where they deemed immunity from molestation more certain than in unprotected towns. Kenilworth at the commencement of the war had been garrisoned for the King, but the defenders were soon stealthily withdrawn as the rebels in the district increased in numbers; a fight between them and a body of Parliamentarian troops from Coventry taking place at Curdworth near Coleshill, just prior to the battle of Edge Hill.

So far as Warwickshire's part in the Civil War is concerned the most stirring and memorable event after the battle of Edge Hill was the attack upon and the destruction of a part of Birmingham by Prince Rupert on Easter Monday of the year 1643.

Although many echoes of the struggle which was fiercely waged, and with varying fortune to the contending parties, up and down the country for a further period of two and a half years, reached Warwickshire, and although several severe engagements were fought in the neighbouring counties of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, and Berkshire, no very considerable fighting took place in Warwickshire itself after the burning of Birmingham. It was, however, so near the field of other actions that its peace was perpetually disturbed during the succeeding years, until the final crushing of the Royalist adherents at Naseby on June 14, 1645, and the surrender of the King to the Scots in the following year at Newark. Troops passed

along its peaceful lanes on many occasions, and manor-houses were raided by detached bodies of Royalists and Parliamentarians, producing a feeling of unrest and insecurity amongst the inhabitants, and imparting an element of romance to many a time-worn building.

With the return of Charles II. in the early years of the Commonwealth, and during the brief campaign succeeding his invasion of England to assert his kingship, which ended so disastrously on "Cromwell's day," September 3, 1651, at the battle of Worcester, Warwickshire once more knew the presence of troops within its peaceful confines, and the hurrying to and fro along its lanes and byways of fugitive Royalists and armed pursuers.

After the battle Charles, whilst escaping in disguise, in company with Miss Jane Lane, fled into Warwickshire, narrowly escaping capture by some of the Lord Protector's men near Bearley Cross. It was in the kitchen of a house at Long Marston that the royal fugitive, to render his disguise more effective, took his turn at the kitchen spit! And Packington Old Hall also sheltered him and his companion during their flight.

Warwickshire played no very prominent part in the history of the half century immediately succeeding the Restoration, and although the intervening years between the latter and the Napoleonic Wars saw many changes, the life of the county was on the whole placid and uneventful. Situated far inland, the wars of the closing years of the eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth century made little impression

on a county then so agricultural in its interests and pursuits.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century Warwick grew little, though remaining the county town; and even the anciently renowned city of Coventry had but an uneventful history, and progress chiefly remarkable for its development of the ribbon industry.

Birmingham was as yet almost unthought of as a great industrial centre of population.

The history of Warwickshire during the middle and latter years of the nineteenth century is chiefly industrial, although the period which has seen the rise of Birmingham has not been entirely without an underlying element of romance. The "hardware town" had from early times, as we have already pointed out, attracted many artisans, skilled workmen, and ingenious inventors to itself by reason of its freedom from corporate restrictions. And at the end of the eighteenth century it had commenced to grow and expand, not, of course, at first with the rapidity that was later on to mark its advance; but, nevertheless, with an expansion which was notable and also marked in the character of its industries. The gun and sword trades, which had existed at the time of the Civil War, grew steadily; and to these were added others connected with iron, steel, and brass, and in the days of Edmund Burke the rise of the jewellery trade, and that of other ornaments, had made it what he described as "the toy shop of Europe."

Indeed, the growth and progress of Birmingham

has shed upon Warwickshire almost all the lustre which it has enjoyed for more than a century, and since the passing away of the more stirring days of internecine strife. As was but natural the town, now become a centre of a vast unrepresented population, took an active and prominent part in the agitation which preceded the passing of the great Reform Bill of 1832 ; and its famous public meetings in support of that measure not only may be said to have represented the county as well as Birmingham itself, but also the Midlands generally.

Defeated in 1831, the measure was reintroduced in the following year, and was read a third time on the 19th of March, and on the 26th of the same month was sent up to the Lords. It passed its second reading, but there were grave fears that it would be thrown out at the third. An enormous gathering of the Birmingham Union on New Hall Hill, at which 200,000 people were stated to be present, took place in support of the Bill. In the petition to the House of Lords, sent by this great gathering, it was prayed that they would not mutilate the Bill, and that they "would not drive to despair a high-minded, a generous, and fearless people."

The news that the Bill was defeated and that Lord Grey had resigned stirred up the whole population—timid and fearless, enthusiasts and apathetics alike —whose anger and determination to see this measure become law were manifested in no uncertain way. Still treasured in some households are copies of the

placards that were exhibited, which bore these words :—

NOTICE.

No Taxes paid here
Until
The Reform Bill is Passed.

In the subsequent agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws Birmingham also took its part, and in connection with this there was once more serious rioting.

The political prominence of Birmingham, first earned in the reign of Charles I., has continued of steady growth, although its "great fame for hearty, wilful affected disloyalty" asserted by Clarendon happily no longer abides with it.

Warwickshire, as we have stated, was in ancient times largely an agricultural county, and, indeed, may still be reckoned so. Its well-watered meads and pleasant valleys providing pasturage for cattle, and its rich soil being productive of excellent crops.

The war, however, brought about a great change in the nature of its industries. The men were in large numbers called off the land to supply the needs of man power in the army; their places were taken by older men who were above military age, by boys, women, and girls of all ranks in society.

The temporary growth in population of such towns as Coventry and Birmingham was another noticeable effect of the necessities of war. On the outskirts of the latter town temporary dwellings were erected in large numbers to accommodate the munitions workers

WARWICK CASTLE.

drawn to Birmingham from all parts of the country, and in the case of the former town enormous building operations were undertaken to provide factories and to house the workers engaged in the same.

Coventry in war time was a very different place to the town of even the period immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities; and different from the city of to-day which has gradually tended to return to the normal.

The development of the munitions industries in the county formed one of the most significant features of its life from the spring of 1915 to the autumn of 1918. Not only was the very face of the countryside greatly altered in many districts, but the very lives of the people underwent a radical though temporary change.

Unfortunately industrial unrest, which immediately followed the armistice and extended into several of the succeeding years, prevented Warwickshire from making full use of the enormously increased facilities for output of manufactured articles for which the county has long been famous. Even factories which only needed conversion in comparatively unimportant details to fit them for the struggle to capture the world-trade that waited to be won by enterprise and hard work were left idle or were very imperfectly adapted to the needs of peaceful production.

But that there is a great future for this county in the very heart of England when industry has learned its lesson, and enterprise is once more harnessed to the chariot wheels of commerce no one can doubt.

Warwickshire

To-day Warwickshire has largely recovered from the temporary dislocation of its life by war, and has returned to its more normal occupations and mode of living.

Its war record, to be read in the gallant deeds of its fighting sons, and in the amazing work performed by its women, girls, lads, and older men, gives it a place of honour among the counties of central England, as its natural loveliness has given it one of compelling charm among the most beautiful.

CHAPTER III

FAYRE WARWICK TOWN: ITS HISTORY AND ROMANCE

The town of Warwick is undoubtedly of very ancient origin, and from the earliest period of its existence has been considered the chief town of the shire. It is situated upon a rocky plateau on the north side of the river Avon, and blessed with a dry and fertile soil, with luxuriant meadows on one side and well-wooded and well-cultivated lawns on the other.

It seems not unlikely indeed that Gutherline or Kimberline, one of the British kings who lived in the time of Christ, was the founder of the first settlement at Warwick, and that Guiderius, the former's son, enlarged the town and bestowed upon it considerable privileges. Originally, according to Rous, it was known as Cær-guthleon, contracted into Cær-leon, derived from Cær, a fortress, and Guthline, the name of its founder.

It was upon the site of an ancient church of All Saints founded by St. Dubritius that the first castle was ultimately built; and about this time that King Vortigern gave his ill-judged invitation to the

Saxons, who, arriving nominally to assist him against the Picts and Scots, turned their swords against the nation to whose assistance they had come.

St. Dubritius fled during these disorders to Wales for safety, and abandoned Warwick, his cathedral, and his see to the mercy of the invaders.

One ancient historian gives a vivid description of the rapine and destruction to which the centre of England in general, and Warwick in particular, was at that time subjected. And in his pages one sees the surging hosts of Picts and Scots and Britons and Saxons contending for the mastery of what was, even in those days, one of the most fertile and desirable districts of all England.

Raided, burned, with many of the inhabitants put to the sword, Warwick lay in ruins until the coming of King Warremund, the forbear of the kings of Mercia, who rebuilt the town. Under his rule and that of his descendants the town is stated to have flourished and grown in size and importance until the coming of the Danes.

After some years, in which it once more lay in ruins, Warwick rose phœnix-like from its ashes under the hand of Lady Æthelflæd, daughter of King Alfred the Great and wife of King Æthelred. This princess in the year 915 built the first castle and a fortification called the Dungeon (donjon or keep?), and this building served as a residence of the earls from that date for a century and a half, until the coming of William the Conqueror.

The De Newburghs

In the early years of William the Conqueror, Turchill, a Saxon, was Earl of Warwick, a man of great power, possessions, and influence ; and he it was who was commanded by William the Conqueror to fortify the town more strongly by means of walls and ditches, and to add to and strengthen the existing castle.

A little later King William gave to his Norman favourite Henry de Newburgh the title of Earl of Warwick and a grant of the castle, town, and suburbs, to be held in *capite per Servitum Comitatus.* The new Earl conferred upon one of his priests one-tenth of his tolls, as an offering for the health of his soul. And Roger de Newburgh, his son, who succeeded him, £4 : 10s. rent for a similar purpose to his priest.

In 1261, in the reign of Henry III., John de Plessetis, who had married Margery, the last heiress of the De Newburghs, and thereby had succeeded to the earldom, granted to the burgesses a charter to enable them to hold each year a fair lasting three days, for which privilege they paid no toll,—a concession of far more value and importance than appears to the uninitiated.

The male branch of the De Newburghs failing, the family was succeeded by that of Mauduit, and one of these, William, who was a supporter of Henry III., was surprised and taken prisoner during the wars of the barons, and, in consequence of the capture, the walls of Warwick Castle were destroyed. He was also obliged to pay for the ransom of himself and his

Countess the then large sum of 1900 marks (about £1250). He died childless, and was succeeded by his sister's husband, William de Beauchamp, who in the reign of Edward I. possessed the borough in chief in 1279, and also held annually a fair, which lasted for sixteen days, commencing on the eighth day before the Feast of St. Peter ad Vincula, and a weekly market on Wednesdays.

A strange sidelight on these days is thrown by the record that there was a pillory and tumbril as well as assize of bread in connection with this fair. De Beauchamp also instituted a fifteen days' fair, which commenced on the eve of the Feast of St. Peter and Paul.

In the year 1290 William de Beauchamp's successor, Guy, finding it necessary to undertake considerable works for the walling in of the town and the paving of its streets, was granted a patent by Edward I. by which he was entitled to receive a toll during seven years on all vendible articles. But the works not having been completed within that period, he and his successor Thomas obtained an extension of the original or similar patents for ten years longer.

A very interesting circumstance in connection with the Thomas de Beauchamp we have just referred to, who had in 1351 a charter of free warren at Warwick, is that he "at the suit of his lady, and for the health of his own soul and his ancestors' souls," freed the traders resorting hither for the future from terrage, stallage, and all other sorts of toll. The petition

having been made because the said traders had been, by the heavy exactions of previous holders of the title, driven away from the market at Warwick, to the great detriment of the town.

The Municipal history of Warwick is unfortunately very obscure, although there seems little or no doubt that the town was anciently incorporated and had the privilege of returning members to Parliament, but when it was first incorporated, and whether such incorporation and privilege continued without interruption is not ascertainable. A record, however, exists that there was a Mayor in 1279, in the reign of Edward I., and that twenty-one years later the Mayor of the day and bailiffs were ordered to allow Phillip de Rout and William de Serdely reasonable expenses for their services as members of Parliament for that year. Afterwards, however, in the reign of Edward III., the King's mandate for the same purpose was, strange to tell, addressed to the bailiffs only.

The earliest known date of incorporation under royal charter with the designation of bailiff and burgesses occurs in the reign of Philip and Mary, but it is certain that letters patent were granted by Henry VIII. in 1546 to the borough under the Municipal title of "burgesses only." This grant of letters patent was confirmed by one from James I. in 1613, and was again followed by another during the reign of William and Mary, bearing the date of March 5, 1694, which remains the governing charter of the borough down to the present time.

The history of the town of Warwick has, as we have remarked in a previous chapter, been largely that of the county itself, and during the ages when wars and revolts swayed parties in England the town played its part in the romantic and tragic happenings of those times.

The old stone cross, which stood at the intersection of the two ancient and principal streets as late as the reign of James I., has long ago disappeared, but in few towns in England are there more notable survivals of ancient times to be found than in Warwick. One of the most interesting buildings is the ancient Chapel of St. James, now known as the West Gate, and formerly as the Hongyn Gate, standing where the High Street terminates, on the crest of the hill, supported for its entire length by a lofty groined archway, itself placed on the bed-rock which rises several feet above the road surface. This structure anciently formed a defensive gateway to the old and fortified town.

In the reign of Henry I. this chapel was given by Roger, Earl of Warwick, to the Church of St. Mary. That it was of very small value is proved by the fact that in 1368, in the reign of Edward III., the latter was estimated at only £1.

In 1383, in the reign of Richard II., the advowson was given to the Guild of St. George, and the fraternity established in Warwick the same year was founded by a license granted to Robert Dynelay, Hugh Cooke, and William Russell on the 20th of April, giving them privilege to extend their numbers

LEICESTER'S HOSPITAL, WARWICK.

by admission of other inhabitants of the borough, and to build a chantry for two priests to sing mass every day in the Chapel, which stood over the west gate, for the good estate of King Richard and his consort Ann ; of his mother, also Michael de la Pole, and all the brothers and sisters of the said Guild during their lives in this world, and for the everlasting happiness of their souls, as also for the souls of King Edward III., Edward Prince of Wales, the father of Richard II., and their royal progenitors, and all the faithful departed.

Thomas de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, eventually had license to give the advowson of the Church of St. James at the same time that the Guild brethren purchased two houses, a loft, and the quarry in Warwick for their use.

At length, however, the Guild of St. George the Martyr and the Guild of the Holy Trinity and the Virgin, in the early part of Henry VI.'s reign, became one, and four priests belonging to the Guilds sang masses ; two of them at "Our Lady's Chapel" in St. Mary's, and the others in the two chapels built over the gates. This Guild also paid in part the secular canons attached to St. Mary's Church, gave a weekly dole of alms to eight poor people of the Guild, and also assisted in maintaining the great bridge over the Avon.

After the Dissolution of the Monasteries the establishment was granted by Edward VI., on July 23, 1551, to Sir Nicholas l'Estrange, Kt. and his heirs. And from him it passed into the possession of Robert

Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who made it in 1571, in the reign of Elizabeth, a hospital for twelve men, called brethren, and a master, who must be a clergyman of the Church of England ; the preference being given to the Vicar of St. Mary's if he offered himself for the post. The appointment of these brethren is vested in the heirs of the founder, now represented by Lord D'Lisle and Dudley, of Penhurst Place, in the county of Kent, who is a descendant of Mary, the sister of Robert Dudley, who married Sir Henry Sidney, of the same place.

The brethren elected to this foundation must, according to the statutes, be either tenants or servants of the founder or his heirs, and resident in the county of Warwick, or soldiers of the Sovereign, more especially those who had been wounded on active service ; the latter to be chosen from the parishes of Warwick, Kenilworth, and Stratford-on-Avon, or from those of Wooton-under-Edge and Erlingham, in the county of Gloucester.

Of recent years radical changes have been made in the charity, one of these being that provision is now made for the housing and maintenance in the hospital itself of twelve women, wives of the brethren. Nowadays, as none of the founder's heirs have tenants resident in either of the two counties, the brethren are chosen under the second provision we have mentioned, and all of them have been soldiers of the Crown. Here now dwell in comfort and peace the master and the twelve brethren, the former having a salary of £400 and a residence ; and the latter pensions amounting to

£80 each, with separate apartments, consisting of bedroom, sitting-room, and pantry, with the use of a common kitchen and the services of a cook and housekeeper.

There are many interesting customs in connection with the hospital; one of which is that the brethren must daily attend service in the chapel, and are obliged when they appear in public to wear a blue gown, on the sleeve of which is worn a silver badge with the crest of the bear and ragged staff. With one exception these badges are the ancient ones originally provided; the exception being a modern reproduction in facsimile of the badge which was stolen many years ago.

The beautiful specimen of a half-timbered building, which stands raised upon a lime-shaded terrace above the road level, is approached through an arch gateway, above which is the inscription, "Hospitivm Collegiatvm Roberti Dvdlei Comitis Leycestriae," with the date 1571, and the Dudley device, a double-tailed lion rampant in the left spandril, and the device of the Sidneys, a barbed dart, in the other.

On the front of the house is a fine old sun-dial, with the initials E. R., and there are also thirteen shields, with the armorial bearings of the various families connected with the founder, the most distinguished having been placed over the archway leading to the inner quadrangle. On the north side of the latter is the master's residence, behind which is a pleasant old-fashioned garden, from the western side of which there is a fine view of the surrounding country and the distant Cotswold Hills.

The garden contains a famous mulberry tree, almost old enough to be historic, and in summer time the spot is gay with the bloom of old-fashioned flowers. There is a charming vista of foliage and lawn through a fine Norman circular-headed arch which, found during repairs to the chapel, was erected in its present position some years ago. On the eastern side of the garden is an open space, and the brethren's apartments are arranged on the south and west sides of the quadrangle. On the right side of the latter is the famous old kitchen, in which the brethren pass a great deal of their time on chilly days, smoking and chatting, often fighting their battles o'er again, surrounded by many historic relics, including a handsome black oak cabinet once in Kenilworth Castle ; an ancient Saxon chair ; and another used by James I. at the supper he took with Sir Fulke Greville.

One of the most interesting relics is the portion of a curtain from Cumnor Hall, said to have been worked by ill-fated Amy Robsart. Amongst the more martial are halberds and pistols of ancient date, the King of Dahomey's State execution sword, and some interesting copper tankards dating some two hundred years back.

The great banqueting hall, in which Sir Fulke Greville in 1617 entertained James I., is on the western side of the quadrangle, but it has fallen on evil times, and is now divided up into domestic offices.

The chapel in which the brethren worship is reached by a flight of steps from the outer terrace, which runs

in front of the alms-houses at an elevation above the street. The tower of the present interesting building was in all probability erected by Thomas de Beauchamp about the end of the fourteenth century, and on the embattled parapet are to be seen his arms.

In 1863 the stability of the building gave some cause for anxiety, and flying buttresses were added on the south side for the purpose of strengthening it. Prior to that date the chapel was unfortunately disfigured by several eighteenth-century additions, which were removed and a thorough and well-advised restoration undertaken.

Dividing the chapel into almost equal portions is a finely-carved oak screen, within which are the stalls of the brethren and officials. Near the altar is an interesting piece of needlework of floral design, said to have come from the hands of Amy Robsart.

Beneath the chapel is the gateway, similar to that on the eastern side of the town, built on the sandstone rock and with strong vaulting, which formed a part of the twelfth-century fortifications.

A little beyond Northgate Street, on a knoll, stands the Priory, formerly dedicated to St. Sepulchre, and founded by Henry de Newburgh, first Earl of Warwick, as a monastery for Canons Regular. At the time of the Dissolution of Monasteries this ancient foundation was granted to a trusted retainer of John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland, Thomas Hawkins, whose father sold fish at the town Market Cross. Unappreciative of either antiquity or the traditions of the building into

whose possession he had come, Hawkins, as might be anticipated, pulled down the monastery and on the site of it erected the present building, which was finished about 1565.

In this fine old Elizabethan mansion, with its many windows and gables and air of ancient peace, is a lofty hall and a magnificent old oak staircase and oak-panelled dining-room. The south front is comparatively modern, as it was rebuilt about the middle of the eighteenth century ; but the north front still preserves many of its original features.

One of the most interesting incidents connected with the house was the surprise visit paid by Queen Elizabeth on August 17, 1572, who, coming over from Kenilworth unexpectedly, found the Earl and Countess of Warwick at supper, and sat down to the meal with them. The owner of the house was confined to his bed ; but the Queen, who, if tradition may be believed, was less austere than historians would have us infer, setting aside ceremony, visited "the good man of the house, who at that time was grievously vexed with the gout."

The first owner of the Priory, by means of grants and judicious purchases, managed to accumulate a large amount of property, which, in less than four years from the date of his death—occurring in 1576—his son Edward had squandered, even to the selling of his home to Sergeant Puckering, then Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, whom he sought to cheat by means of a fraudulent conveyance. Hawkins was prosecuted in

the Star Chamber, and eventually ended his days in the Fleet Prison.

The Priory remained in the possession of the Puckering family until the beginning of the eighteenth century, when it became the property of a Mr. Henry Wise, a superintendent of the Royal Gardens at Hampton Court. Although this fine survival of domestic architecture of Elizabethan times was of necessity acquired by the Great Western Railway Company in the middle of the last century, in connection with the extension of their line to Birmingham, it fortunately escaped destruction, and was eventually sold by the Company to Mr. Thomas Lloyd, a banker of Birmingham.

At the foot of Smith Street, which runs down from the East Gate, stands the fine old house known as St. John's Hospital, founded in the reign of Henry II. by William de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, as a hospital in aid of the poor, and for relief and reception of strangers.

The first occupants of this interesting building were Knights Templars, who were succeeded by the Knights of St. John. After the Dissolution of Monasteries it fell into the hands of one Anthony Stoughton, a descendant of whom—Nicholas Stoughton—erected the present building at the commencement of the seventeenth century. The property eventually came into the possession of the Warwick family, and still remains so. The interior of the house is well worth inspection, as it contains a fine Jacobean oak staircase, and a panelled, tapestry-hung room.

Of the many churches, stated to have been ten in number, in addition to the Priory, Nunnery, and other religious houses which existed in early times, little is known ; but two—those of St. Mary and St. Nicholas —which still survive were, even in the reign of Edward III., found to afford sufficient accommodation for the inhabitants of the town. Indeed, an ancient decree dated 1367 enjoined upon all persons that they should attend the church of St. Mary. The sites of several other churches, it is true, are known, but nearly all visible traces of them have long ago disappeared. Of these aforetime ecclesiastical buildings the church of St. Michael, in the northern part of the town, is nowadays a blacksmith's shop, whilst that of John the Baptist was formerly near the centre of the market-place, and St. Helen's was replaced by the Priory of St. Sepulchre. The church of St. Peter, which was pulled down in the reign of Henry VI., stood in the middle of the town, and another dedicated to the same saint was built over the eastern gate, whilst St. Lawrence's was situated on the western side.

Of the religious houses few traces remain, all of them having been dissolved, and many of them entirely pulled down at the date of the Reformation.

St. Mary's, the principal and beautiful church, stands upon the site of a much earlier building, which existed prior to the Conquest, and was in 1123 made collegiate by the transferring of the Collegiate Church of All Saints from within the Castle. It is probable that the present building was either rebuilt or very much

BEAUCHAMP CHAPEL, WARWICK.

enlarged by Roger de Newburgh in the reign of Henry I. And Thomas de Beauchamp, in the reign of Edward III., commenced to re-erect the choir ; whilst his son, also Thomas, who succeeded him, completed the rebuilding of the whole church in 1394. This undertaking had been necessitated by the damage the building had received from fire during the reign of Stephen. The work was completed at the end of the fourteenth century ; and the chapel of Our Lady, now generally known as the Beauchamp Chapel, was added during the middle part of the fifteenth century.

Just three hundred years after Thomas de Beauchamp had finished the rebuilding of the church it was once more almost entirely destroyed by a most disastrous fire, which broke out near the west gate of the town on the 5th of September, 1694, and eventually destroyed the greater part of Warwick. In terrible alarm many of the inhabitants removed their furniture and belongings to St. Mary's for safety, and it is generally supposed that some articles amongst the number must have been partially burnt and smouldering, as the church took fire from the interior, and the tower, nave, and transepts were completely burnt out, and the shell so damaged as to necessitate the remains being pulled down.

Almost immediately a subscription was set on foot for relief of the distressed inhabitants and the rebuilding of the church, with the exception of the eastern portion, which fortunately had been saved. The work was entrusted to Sir William Wilson, of Sutton Coal-

field ; and seen from a distance the church and tower present an imposing and indeed pleasing appearance ; but architectural students on nearer inspection find their sense of congruity disturbed by the medley of the Gothic and Classic styles which are embodied in the design.

The tower is 130 feet to the top of the battlements, and 44 feet additional height is gained by the crocketted pinnacles, which are eight in number. In it are hung ten bells, the first nine having been cast during the years 1700 to 1710, and the tenth bell in 1814. The chimes every four hours play a tune, which is changed at midnight of each day. On Sundays, the *Easter Hymn* ; on Mondays, *Home, Sweet Home* ; Tuesdays, *Jenny Lind* ; Wednesdays, *The Blue Bells of Scotland* ; Thursdays, *There's nae luck aboot the Hoose* ; Fridays, *Life let us cherish* ; Saturdays, *Warwickshire Lads and Lasses*.

The present church, which consists of a chancel, nave with aisles, transepts, and a western tower, and the chapter-house on the north and the Beauchamp Chapel to the south of the chancel, presents a somewhat incongruous appearance owing to a reckless mixture of designs both inside and out. The interior, which has no special features of note, contains, however, a large number of eighteenth-century marble monuments of considerable interest, though unpretentious in character.

At the west end of the church is a bust of Walter Savage Landor the poet, who was born at Warwick on

January 30, 1775, in the old-fashioned house just below East Gate, and died at Florence on September 17, 1864.

In the north transept, on the east side, near the door, is an interesting mural brass of the sixteenth century, with effigies of Thomas Oken and his wife Joan. The inscription, which is a quaint one, runs thus, "Of your charyte give thanks for the soules of Thomas Oken and Jone and his wyff, on whose soules Jesus hath mercy, Jesus hath mercy, Amen. Remember the charyte for the pore for ever. Ao dni : mccccclxxiii."

This Thomas Oken, who was born of poor parents in the town, became very wealthy, and left estates of very considerable value for the endowment of local and educational charities.

On the north side of the entrance to the Beauchamp Chapel is a marble slab, on which are the incised brass effigies of the second Earl of Warwick, Thomas Beauchamp, and his Countess Margaret, who died in 1401 and 1406 respectively. The monument is an interesting one, as the effigies show the Earl clad in full armour, with his feet resting on a bear, whilst the Countess wears a low-bodied gown, over which is a long mantle-like garment fastened at the breast ; on her head is a cap with her hair falling in long ringlets on to her shoulders ; at her feet is a dog, wearing a collar of bells. This brass, which is valuable to students of costume and archæologists alike, was originally fixed to the upper portion of a high tomb, which stood at the eastern end of the aisle, and was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1694.

The chancel or choir is generally supposed to have been erected by the second Thomas Beauchamp about 1392. The style of the east window, however, and the panel-work of the exterior of the east wall makes it probable that these portions were at all events altered from their original state by Richard Beauchamp, the builder of the adjoining chapel.

On the north side of the altar is an interesting and originally groined recess, faced with three arches, which in all probability was used as "The Holy Sepulchre" during Passion Week in the olden times.

At St. Mary's, Warwick, prior to the Reformation, the host and crucifix were borne in procession on Good Friday through the church to the north side of the chancel, after which they were deposited in the sepulchre, the door was then shut, and on that and the following night was watched by persons specially chosen for the purpose: in imitation, of course, of the soldiers set to guard the body of Christ. Early on Easter morning the host and crucifix were removed with great ceremonial, the priest pronouncing the words, "Surrexit, non est hic."

The reredos is modern, as are also the carved oak stalls. In the middle of the choir is a high tomb, with the recumbent effigies of the first Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and founder of the choir, who died in 1369, with his Countess Catherine, who was a daughter of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March. The tomb is a very elaborate one, and around it are thirty-six niches, each one containing a figure supposed to represent a

connection or descendant of the house of Beauchamp ; the panels beneath the niches containing small shields with coats-of-arms, now, alas ! greatly defaced.

Although Queen Elizabeth is said to have buried this nobleman with great solemnity, apparently her generosity extended no further, for no monument or inscription marks the spot.

The former chapter-house now serves the purpose of a mausoleum, the inner side of it being rectangular and the outer semi-hexagonal. Around the sides are nine stone seats, placed under recessed canopies. In the centre is a large and heavy-looking tomb of the famous Fulke Greville, the first Lord Brooke, who died at the age of seventy-four on September 30, 1628. Round the edge of the upper slab is the following somewhat strange inscription, " Fulke Grevill, servant to Qvenne Elizabeth, conceller to King Iames, and frend to Sir Phillip Sydney. Trophaevm peccati (a trophy of sin)."

Fulke Greville's death was an exceedingly tragic one, and occurred in the following manner. Having omitted to reward one of his old servants named Hayward, who had spent a long period in his service, and being expostulated with for the omission, he was stabbed in the back by Hayward in his bedroom at Brooke House, London, which stood near the present Brooke Street, on September 30, 1628. The murderer, apparently struck with remorse, left his master bleeding to death, and going into another room locked the door and stabbed himself in the stomach with a sword.

The crypt of St. Mary's is interesting from the fact that three of the four pillars which divided it longitudinally are undoubtedly the remains of the ancient church of Roger de Newburgh, which was erected early in the twelfth century; the remaining pillar is in the Decorated style of the fourteenth century, and is probably part of the work of Thomas de Beauchamp.

A portion of the old town cucking stool, used in former times for the ducking in a horse pond of disorderly women and scolds, is now preserved in the crypt.

The architectural gem of St. Mary's Church is undoubtedly the Chapel of Our Lady, generally known as the Beauchamp Chapel, which is one of the finest buildings of its kind in the kingdom, and was founded under the will of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, as a mortuary for himself, and was commenced in 1443, but although completed twenty-one years later was not consecrated until 1475.

An immense sum, amounting to £2481 : 4 : 7, was spent upon the chapel and the tomb of Richard Beauchamp. Estimates place the sum spent upon this beautiful memorial at thirty-five to forty thousand pounds in the money value of the present day. The building is one of the most magnificent and pleasing examples of the Decorated Gothic style; the exterior enrichments, consisting of delicate tracery, panels, and other decorative adornments, present a most interesting and rich appearance. Elegant buttresses with pinnacle terminations support the walls, and on the south are

three fine six-light windows of beautiful design. The eastern gable contains a canopied niche, in which are figures of the Virgin Mary with the child Christ, and on either side of her representations of Simeon and Anna the Prophetess.

The chapel is entered by a doorway situated in the south transept of the church, the hollow moulding of which doorway represents foliage and the ragged staff, which is the cognisance of the Beauchamps, and above this is to be seen the Arms of the family on a shield, supported on either side by the bear and ragged staff.

The interior of the chapel is exceedingly rich ; the windows are imposing ones, filled with good stained-glass, and beneath them are canopied niches. The ceiling is nearly flat, as is also that of the chancel of the church ; it has groined ribs resembling net-work.

The stalls, situated on each side of the chapel, are of carved oak, the arms being in the form of bears, griffins, and lions with standards having carved finials. The altar-piece, which is in low relief, represents the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, and is by Collins of Warwick, who executed the work from a design by Lightoler in 1735. It is perhaps unfortunate that the altar-piece does not harmonise with the architectural scheme of the chapel, although the work is good ; but the canopy above is of quite indifferent merit.

There are four monumental tombs of great antiquarian and artistic value : the centre one that of the founder, Richard Beauchamp, and the one next to it on the western side the tomb of Ambrose Dudley, known

as the good Earl of Warwick. Against the northern wall is a fine monument to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, the favourite of Elizabeth, and his Countess. The recumbent figures of the Earl and his wife are coloured, and placed on a tomb in front ; whilst against the southern wall is the monument of " that noble impe, the young Lord Denbigh, their infant son and heir." These monuments, which represent a period of some hundred and fifty years, are not only interesting from a historical point of view, but more especially to students as representing the changes which took place in the fashion of sepulchral monuments during that period. A record exists that during the Civil War in 1642 the Parliamentary forces, under the leadership of Colonel Purefoy, " did break into the chapel and beat down and deface these monuments of antiquity." But it seems probable that their depredations were chiefly confined to the pulling down of the altar, as none of the tombs show signs of having been seriously damaged.

The great tomb of Richard Beauchamp, which represents such an excellent example of the art of the period, is constructed of grey Purbeck marble, with its sides divided in five compartments ; each of the latter holding a large canopied niche, referred to in the contract as a " principall housing." There is a similar niche above, and these divisions are flanked by sunk panelwork, the decorative part of which is beautifully carved. Underneath each of the principal niches is a carved quatrefoil within a square, bearing a shield charged with armorial bearings enamelled on copper. The

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principal niches, numbering fourteen, contain a like number of images, called "weepers and mourners"; these are made of latten, a variety of brass, and are gilded. Of these figures seven are males and seven females, and they represent persons of rank who were connected either by blood or marriage to Earl Richard.

The small niches, which number eighteen, contain images or angels cast in the same metal, which was generally used for sepulchral brasses and metal ornaments of tombs, and these also are richly gilt. They bear scrolls in their hands on which are engraved the following words, "Sit Deo Laus et Gloria, Defunctis Misericordia." The metal-work of this magnificent tomb was carried out by one William Austen, citizen and brass-founder of London, who agreed to "cast and make an image of a man armed, of fine latten, garnished with certain ornaments, to wit with sword and dagger, with a garter, with a helme and crest under his head, and at his feet a bear musled, and a griffon perfectly made of the finest latten, according to pattern and layde on the tombe." He also agreed to supply and erect a "hearse." This hearse was an open metal canopy of bars and hoops, shaped very much like the rest used in hospitals to prevent the weight of the bedclothes troubling the patient, over which a pall was thrown, and that on the Earl's tomb is one of the very few now remaining intact.

This beautiful memorial is fortunately almost as perfect as the day on which it was erected, more than

four hundred years ago. On the moulded verge of the tomb runs a long English inscription in raised black letter characters, with the bear and ragged staff intermixed, setting forth how the deceased had been buried, when and where he had died, and his titles and accomplishments, and relating how his "bodye with great deliberacon and ful worshipful conduit bi see and by lond was broght to Warrewik the iiii day of October the yer aboueseid, and was leide with ful solenne exequies in a feir cheste made of stone in this Chirche afore the west dore of this Chapel according to his last will and Testament, therin to reste til this Chapel by him devised i' his lief were made."

It is in St. Mary's Church that the Warwick doles of bread are distributed on Sunday mornings, irrespective of creed, by the parish sexton. The doles, which were instituted by Joseph Blissett in 1713, and a Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Smith about the same date, consist of thirty-two loaves, eight threepenny and twenty-four twopenny,—the former for the married, the latter for bachelors, spinsters, widows, and widowers. The providing source is derived from rent charges on houses in High Street and Church Street.

The only other church of interest in Warwick is that of St. Nicholas, situated almost opposite to the entrance of the castle. The date of its foundation is not known with accuracy, but it would appear to have been prior to the Norman Conquest. The present building, which consists of a tower, spire, nave with aisles, and chancel, was erected in 1780 upon the

site of an ancient church. According to one authority the chancel was in ancient times the choir to the House of Nuns, destroyed by Canute the Dane about 1016, but afterwards restored.

Very little can be said for the present erection, which is a very poor specimen of architecture, and is only of interest in that it contains some interesting seventeenth-century monuments of the Stoughton family, and an excellent specimen of a brass with effigy of Robert Willardsey, first vicar, who died in 1424.

Once a walled town of great strength, of these ramparts scarcely any traces now remain with the exception of those immediately adjoining the east and west gateways. Warwick of to-day, with its country town life and its race-course, seems to have little in common, other than the survival of interesting buildings and its magnificent castle, with those ancient times in which the cry of "A Warwick! a Warwick!" often raised in battle and feud, struck terror into the hearts of those who heard it.

A little more than a mile to the north of Warwick, on the Coventry Road, stands the famous Guy's Cliff, now the seat of the Percy family, beautifully situated amongst a wealth of trees overlooking a fine stretch of the Avon. Anciently, and up to the reign of Henry IV., the place was known as Gibbeclyve, and the name it bears at the present day would appear to have been given it in memory of the redoubtable Guy of Warwick, whose somewhat mythical exploits caused him to take a high place as a popular hero during the Middle Ages.

Unfortunately for those to whom these legendary tales appeal strongly, there are no mention of Guy's exploits in any authentic Chronicle or records of ancient times.

Tradition, however, states that in the last years of the fifth or the first years of the sixth century St. Dubritius, who subsequently became Bishop of Landaff and afterwards Archbishop of Wales, founded an oratory here, in which long afterwards a devout hermit dwelt. The spot remained thus, only distinguished by a hermit's dwelling, until the reign of Henry V., who whilst on a visit to Warwick Castle came to see Guy's Cliff, and decided there to found a chantry for two priests.

An interesting fact in connection with this chantry is that John Rous, the Warwickshire antiquarian and historian, was once a priest here. At the Dissolution of the Monasteries and Religious Orders the property was granted to one Sir Andrew Flammock, knight, whose daughter and heiress married John Colburne in 1579, who obtained a grant of the chapel from Queen Elizabeth. The property has since then passed through many hands, and from a family named Greatheed passed into that of Lord Percy in the spring of 1891, through the marriage of a descendant of the Greatheeds with the honourable Charles Bertie Percy.

The house is one of the most picturesquely situated in Warwickshire, and is built on a sandstone cliff overhanging the river, which widens into a large pool or lake in front. The mansion itself has very ordinary

architectural features, but it contains many interesting pictures and curios.

One picture possesses a romantic interest from the fact that it was painted by Mr. Bertie Greatheed, and is of such a horrifying character that it is hidden from ordinary view by doors specially constructed in front of it. This painting, which is known as "The Cave of Despair," represents the scene described by Spenser in his *Færie Qeene*, Book I. Canto ix. The weird ghastly figure of Despair nearly nude, with clasped hands, unkempt hair, and deeply sunk eyes, sits in the centre of the cave, staring out abstractedly at the spectator. A stabbed corpse, with up-turned eyes and an agonised expression of face, lies on the left; whilst on the right is a Red Cross knight, typical of resolution under awe-inspiring circumstances. Behind him is the terror-stricken face of another spectator. This picture, apart from its gruesome realism and subject, is of considerable artistic merit, and is certainly one to "haunt" those who have been fortunate or unfortunate enough to see it.

There are a number of other pictures by the same artist. One of the most interesting of these pictures is a portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte, which tradition says was painted from a sketch made on the artist's thumb nail during a personal audience.

It was here at Guy's Cliff, when a young girl of seventeen, in the autumn of 1772 and early part of 1773, that Sarah Kemble, afterwards to become famous as Mrs. Siddons, stayed as a companion.

CHAPTER IV

THE STORY OF WARWICK CASTLE

The history of Warwick Castle and the town are in a measure one, and may be considered to have commenced in 914, when tradition avers that Æthelflæd, daughter of Alfred the Great and lady of Mercia, built a castle here, of which, although almost every other trace has long since disappeared, the mound may still be seen upon which the original works were placed.

This same Æthelflæd was one of the most prolific originators of fortifications in the Midlands, and was responsible for those at Tamworth and at Stafford amongst others. Some authorities are inclined to think that Æthelflæd's efforts as regards Warwick Castle were merely of the nature of adding to and strengthening already existing fortifications, which had their origin in the earth-works of the time of St. Dubritius. But whatever may be the exact truth there remains no possible doubt that the Mercian princess was largely responsible for the construction of the great mound which, still bearing her name, stands at the northern end of the castle.

Early in its history the castle was the scene of many stirring episodes connected with the struggles of the Conqueror's immediate successors, and the long wars which were waged between the King and the Barons. In the reign of King Stephen, Gundreth, widow of Roger de Newburgh, whose family held the title of Earl of Warwick, drove the King's soldiers from the castle and surrendered the latter to Henry, Duke of Normandy, who afterwards became Henry II. A little later, during the Wars of the Barons, Sir John Gifford, governor of Kenilworth, surprised the castle of Warwick and carried off William de Mauduit, then Earl of Warwick, and his lady,—the title having at this period passed to the De Mauduits through the family of De Plessitis. The then Earl of Warwick had taken the part of the King against the Barons, and in consequence when the castle was captured the walls were destroyed, although the towers were left standing.

The restoration of the castle must have proceeded rapidly, for we find two years later Henry III. made it his headquarters whilst he was gathering his forces together with which to besiege Kenilworth, at that time held for the Barons. In the following reign the fortifications of the castle were repaired and strengthened by the famous Guy de Beauchamp, "the black dog of Arden," and in the reign of Edward II., in 1312, Piers Gaveston, the Gascon pretender, was brought a prisoner to Warwick, and tried by torch-light in the great hall of the castle, and notwithstanding frenzied entreaties was condemned to death in the

presence of the "black dog of Arden" and the Earls of Gloucester, Lancaster, Hereford, and Arundel. Short shrift was the custom in those days, and on the following morning Gaveston was taken to Blacklow Hill, just outside the town, and there executed. An old account of the event states that his head rolled off down the hill into a thicket, where it was picked up by a missionary friar, who, tradition asserts, carried the horrid burden away in his hood. The body of Gaveston was first buried by the friars in their church at Oxford, and it was afterwards exhumed and buried by the King in the then new church at Langley with some pomp.

By a strange change of fortune the fortress that had for a short time confined Edward's favourite, Piers Gaveston, two years later, on the death of Guy de Beauchamp, was handed over into the custody of the King's new favourite, Hugh le Despenser, who afterwards in 1326 entertained Edward II. at Warwick.

It was not until the following reign that the outer walls, with some of the towers, including the magnificent piece of military architectural construction known as Cæsar's Tower, were erected by Thomas de Beauchamp, whose son, also Thomas, built the tower, which was called Guy's Tower after the traditional warrior of Warwick.

The castle has seen the coming and going of many royal guests, and in 1417 its then onwer, Richard de Beauchamp, the founder of the beautiful Beauchamp Chapel in St. Mary's Church, welcomed Henry V. with

PEEPING TOM, COVENTRY.

a state which was magnificent even for the Middle Ages. On the death of Richard de Beauchamp the title and estates passed into the possession of Richard Neville, who, by his marriage with Ann, daughter of Robert de Beauchamp, was by descent also Earl of Salisbury. This man was destined to go down in history under the title of the King Maker. He it was who captured Edward IV. at Wolvey, some ten miles to the north-east of Coventry, and brought him in 1469 as a prisoner to Warwick ; afterwards removing him to Middleham in Yorkshire, another of his possessions.

Richard III. stayed at Warwick in 1583, soon after his murder of Edward V. in the Tower of London. The castle afterwards came into possession of the Crown, and it was not until the reign of Edward VI. that it was granted to the Dudley family.

Queen Elizabeth was entertained on two occasions at the castle, in 1572 and in 1575, by Ambrose, known as the "Good" Earl of Dudley, whose tomb is in the Beauchamp Chapel of St. Mary's Church. There is also a tradition that Amy Robsart was once for a time a guest at Warwick.

The castle on the death of Ambrose Dudley once more came into possession of the Crown, and remained so until 1605, when King James I. granted it to Sir Fulke Greville, who found the building fallen into a considerable state of ruin.

In 1621 Greville was created Baron Brooke, and a hundred and twenty-five years later Francis, the eighth baron, was made an earl. It is said that Sir Fulke

Greville spent the then enormous sum of £30,000 in repairing and fitting up the castle, and he must also have incurred enormous expenses by his entertainment of James I. on four different occasions, namely, in the years 1617, 1619, 1621, and 1624.

On the first occasion on which the King visited Warwick he partook of a banquet in the Hall of Leicester's Hospital, which event is commemorated by the following inscription, placed in that building :—

> "MEMORANDUM THAT KING JAMES I. WAS RIGHT NOBLY ENTERTAINED AT A SUPPER IN THIS HALL BY THE HONOURABLE SIR FULK GREVILLE, CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, AND ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL, UPON THE FOURTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER ANNO DOM. 1617. GOD SAVE THE KING."

During the Civil Wars Robert Greville (Lord Brooke), Sir Fulke's successor, espoused the Parliamentary cause, and the castle and inhabitants of Warwick heard, in consequence, more than an echo of those stirring times. In 1642 the place was besieged by the Royalists' troops under the Earl of Northampton, in the absence of Lord Brooke. It was, however, vigorously defended by Sir Edward Peyto, who was left in charge. In the end, notwithstanding the fierce attack of the Royalists, after the siege had been sustained for a period of fourteen days, it was raised by Lord Brooke, who had defeated some of the Earl of Northampton's troops at Southam, in the southern portion of Warwickshire.

Since those days the castle has remained the peaceful residence of the Greville family, who, in 1759, became Earls of Warwick on the extinction of the Rich family —who, till that date, possessed the title, although they were in no way connected with the old possessors of it, nor at any time owners of its estates.

The castle, which is situated at the south-east end of the town, quite close to the splendid bridge spanning the Avon, which many years ago replaced the old one, the ruins of which are about a quarter of a mile nearer the castle, stands on a fine rocky promontory of hard sandstone, of which material the castle itself is built. It has stood throughout the ages preserved in a truly wonderful manner.

Within the confines of the castle ramparts are pleasure-grounds of great beauty, and although nowadays the houses of the town approach the walls more nearly than in ancient times, they can detract little or nothing from the grandly beautiful building itself.

The main entrance is by the gatehouse, which stands nearly opposite to the church of St. Nicholas. It was constructed in the first year of the nineteenth century on the site of an Elizabethan house, which belonged to an old Warwick family. In former times there were two other approaches to the castle—one situated on the north side at the end of Castle Street, and the other at the bottom of Mill Street, traces of which are still discernible. This drive leads to the outer court, which is known as the Vineyard, a title preserved since the fifteenth century, when vines really grew

there in such numbers as to justify the employment of women for the purpose of gathering in the harvest of grapes.

The gateway, which was constructed in the fourteenth century, was approached in ancient times by a drawbridge spanning the moat. It is on the inner side of this that the barbican stands, rising to the height of two stories above the archway and projecting from the wall. On either side are two octagonal turrets, freely loopholed for the purpose of defending the bridge and its approaches from attack. Within the drawbridge itself hangs the portcullis, and behind this in the ceiling are four holes through which blazing pitch, hot lead, or other equally unpleasant and destructive materials could be poured on the heads of assailants. In the rear of the portcullis itself stood the ancient and iron-strengthened doors. Even though the attacking party should have found its way through both portcullis and doors into the small court beyond, they would be still subject to a most murderous attack, and be almost entirely at the mercy of the defenders above ; and even though surviving this they would still have to pass the gatehouse, with a groined archway defended by a portcullis, loopholes, and doors like the barbican itself.

The gatehouse is flanked by towers, from the summits of which the defenders could pour down a shower of missiles upon the attacking party still within the court. In the lower chamber of the south-east turret still exists the windlass which in ancient times worked the portcullis of the outer gate.

Clarence and Bear Towers

At the point where the road enters the inner court a fine view of the castle is obtained, with Æthelflæd's mound or the keep, crowned with trees and shrubs, and crossed by the fortifications in which the northern tower stands, the dominating feature.

On the side of the fortifications, opposite the castle, stand the two impressive though never completed towers known as the Clarence and Bear Towers, connected by walls of great thickness and solidity. The first-named was probably commenced by George, Duke of Clarence, brother of Richard III., who, created Earl of Warwick by Edward IV., projected vast additions to the castle, which he did not live to carry out ; and the second tower by Richard himself. Opposite these two towers, extending along the whole river front from Cæsar's Tower to the Hill Tower, which stands at the base of Æthelflæd's mound, is the family mansion, which, although altered and enlarged at various times since feudal days, is still a wonderful erection, almost entirely in keeping with the general aspect of the castle.

In 1770 the entrance porch and the adjoining dining-room, with the rooms over it in front of the great hall, were built by the then Earl of Warwick. The apartments, including the state bedroom and the boudoir and those adjoining the eastern end of the great hall, were in all probability the work of Sir Fulke Greville about 1605, who at the same time considerably altered several other parts of the castle.

The ancient fireplace and the dais were situated

at the west end of the hall, and some traces of the former were discovered at the time of the fire, the chimney still being visible in the south-west angle. Two doorways, now blocked up, originally led to the kitchen and pantry.

The remaining most noticeable features of this, in many respects, unique hall are its large modern recessed windows and the fine oak panelling of the walls, which reaches to a height of about nine feet. The floor is of white and red marble, brought from the neighbourhood of Verona, and the remarkable carved stone mantelpiece was brought from Rome to replace the one destroyed in the fire.

One of the most interesting relics of bygone days amongst the many which are preserved in the castle is the garrison cooking-pot, a remarkably fine cauldron made of bell-metal, and capable of containing over a hundred gallons. This vessel is popularly known as "Guy's porridge pot," and was probably made for the retainers of Sir John Talbot of Swanington, who died about 1365, for there is an old couplet quoted by Nichols in his *History of Leicestershire* running as follows :—

> There is nothing left of Talbot's name,
> But Talbot's pot and Talbot's Lane.

It is difficult to say how or when the pot was first brought to Warwick Castle, but it seems probable that it came into the family through the marriage of Margaret, daughter of Richard de Beauchamp, with John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, from whom the

Dudleys, Viscounts Lisle—afterwards created Earls of Warwick—were descended.

Amongst the many interesting relics which are to be found in this magnificent feudal hall—interesting alike to the archæologist and to the casual observer, because of their romantic associations—are a helmet of Oliver Cromwell; breastplate and morion of the Lord Brooke, who was killed in 1643 at the siege of Lichfield; a fine example of a "double-plated" tilting suit; a suit of armour said to have belonged to Charles Graham, Marquis of Montrose; the mace of the King Maker, Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick; and a tiny suit of armour which belonged to Robert, son of the Earl of Leicester, who is traditionally, but probably incorrectly, said to have been poisoned by his nurse between the age of three and four years; a very interesting square and painted shield of the reign of Edward IV.; and a large number of other arms.

A fine vista through the whole of the State apartments is obtainable from the hall, the length of which suite is upwards of 320 feet. From the great hall the Red Drawing-Room—so called because of the colour of its wainscotted panelling—is reached; it is a handsome chamber, measuring some 30 feet by 19½ feet, with a ceiling of white and gold.

Warwick Castle, as all the world knows, contains an almost unrivalled collection of pictures, the richest treasures of which are by Rubens, Van Dyck, Raphael, and Rembrandt.

In the Cedar Drawing-Room, which possesses deep-

set windows, and takes its name from the wood with which it is panelled, is some of the finest carving in the castle, and also some of the best works of Van Dyck. Indeed it would be difficult to find gathered together in one room more excellent examples of this master's work.

Amongst the most noticeable of the pictures are portraits of James Graham, Marquis of Montrose ; and the composite full length picture of Queen Henrietta Maria, the bust of which was painted by Van Dyck, and the remainder by Sir Joshua Reynolds. There is also a half-length picture of Charles I. by Van Dyck ; two pictures of frail beauties of the Court of Charles II. by Lely ; and a good portrait of Sarah, Countess of Warwick, who died in 1851, by Bonelli.

Among the many other exquisite *objects d'art* which here have an adequate setting is a beautiful table of Florentine mosaic from Grimani Palace, Venice, ornamented in precious stones, such as lapis-lazuli, cornelians, chalcedony, jaspar, and variegated agates, with the arms and honours of the family. Two beautiful early Italian marriage chests also find a place in this apartment, the treasures of which connoisseurs recognise as almost priceless.

Although the Gilt or Green Drawing-Room is of less magnificent proportions, it is notable for its fine plaster ceiling and the graceful and appropriate ornamentation of the walls ; the wainscotting of which in one place masks a secret passage and staircase, used in former days as a means of escape and also for communication

PALACE YARD, COVENTRY.

with the floor below. In this chamber are some of the greatest art treasures of the castle, including three oval portraits of the sons of Robert, Lord Brooke, who was killed during the Civil War; a fine half-length Van Dyck of the Earl of Strafford in armour; a Charles II.; a cavalier in armour, with red scarf and baton, by Van Dyck; a charming "Portrait of a Lady," by Lely; and a notable Rubens, a portrait of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Order of Jesuits, clad in a scarlet chasuble. This latter picture was originally painted for the Jesuit College at Antwerp, and found its way to England at the time of the French Revolution, when it was purchased by the second Earl of Warwick. There is also an excellent Cornelis Janssens, Robert Bertie, Earl of Lindsey, who commanded the Royal forces at the battle of Edgehill, where he was mortally wounded and taken prisoner by the Parliamentarians. And a couple of good examples of the work of Dahl; William, Lord Brooke and Mary, Lady Brooke.

Out of this interesting chamber opens the State Bedroom, from the casements of which are some of the most exquisite views seen from the castle. Below these windows the ancient cedars spread out feathery branches, and the river flows tranquilly by, till it ripples over the Weir, bordered in many places by magnificent elms centuries old. The "State bed," which is of salmon-coloured damask, with coverings of satin richly embroidered with crimson velvet, was formerly the property of Queen Anne, as was also much of the furniture. It was given to the second Earl of Warwick

by King George III. In the room is a magnificent piece of tapestry, depicting the garden of a medieval palace, thought to be Versailles, which was made in Brussels in the early years of the seventeenth century; whilst another interesting relic is the leather-covered travelling trunk of Queen Anne, on which are her initials "A. R." under a crown.

The Boudoir itself, a comparatively small and rather narrow room, is, however, made charming by reason of the magnificent views of the river and park which are obtained from its windows. In it are hung some fine examples of the work of Rubens, Holbein the younger, and Lely, as well as a good Teniers.

The Armoury passage, a narrow corridor running at the back of the gilt drawing-room, State bedroom, and boudoir, and connecting the latter and the compass room, contains one of the finest private collections of medieval armour and weapons in England, as well as quite a number of portraits by Van Dyck, Sir G. Hayter, and others of inferior merit. Amongst the former is a portrait of Christ, said to be one of several painted from a likeness engraved on an emerald presented to Pope Innocent VIII. by the Grand Turk. Amongst the examples of armour are battle-axes, cross-bows, calivers, pikes, arquebuses, daggers, swords, etc. of almost every period of the Middle Ages ; and a fine and almost unique suit of chain-mail, of which each link has its separate rivet.

The Compass Room is a small polygonal ante-chamber communicating with the gilt room. The

principal window contains painted Flemish glass of considerable merit. In this room are some magnificent pictures, including Murillo's famous "Laughing Boy," and a saint by the same artist ; a fine head of an old man by Rubens ; a Bacchanalian Group, by the same ; a good portrait of Maximilian, the first Emperor of Germany, and his sister, by Lucas Cranach ; and the two scriptural pictures, St. Paul Lighting a Fire (Isle of Melita), and St. Paul Shaking off the Viper, both by Rubens.

The chapel has a beautiful window of old painted glass, given by the Earl of Essex in the middle of the eighteenth century ; and in the west window is a headless statuette of a Palmer, thought to be a representation of Guy, Earl of Warwick, in pilgrim's garb.

In the Great Dining-Room, built by Francis, first Earl of Warwick, about the year 1770, are hung some fine pictures, including the famous equestrian portrait of Charles I. by Van Dyck.

The library, which was unhappily destroyed by the fire of 1871, was restored from designs of Mr. G. Fox. The ceiling is panelled and gilded, and there is some beautiful Italian work in the sides of the doors, and a Venetian hooded-marble chimney-piece is of most graceful design.

The Shakespeare room, originally a laundry, which adjoins Cæsar's Tower, contains, as its name implies, the unique collection of Shakespearian memorials. There are good portraits of Queen Elizabeth ; Robert Earl of Leicester ; John Locke the historian ; Oliver Cromwell ; Sir Philip Sidney ; and a Shakespeare

supposed to be by Cornelis Janssens. The room also contains a magnificent piece of furniture, known as the Kenilworth Buffet, which was constructed out of an oak tree formerly growing in the grounds of Kenilworth Castle. The central panel depicts "Queen Elizabeth's entry into Kenilworth Castle; and the other panels scenes from Sir Walter Scott's novel *Kenilworth*, with figures of Shakespeare, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Francis Drake. The Buffet was presented to the Earl and Countess of Warwick on their marriage.

Amongst the treasures relating to Shakespeare are the only known MSS. of his plays written before the close of the seventeenth century. The first of these, which is supposed to have been written about the year 1610, is "The History of King Henry IV.," the two parts in one, and consists of fifty-six leaves. It is generally believed to be in the handwriting of Sir Edward Dearing, of Surrenden, Kent, and to have been transcribed by him from some other MS. since lost, as no printed copy is extant containing the various corrections and alterations shown in this MS.

There is also a volume of MS. poetical pieces, including a copy of "Julius Cæsar," transcribed in the reign of Charles II. This play, it is clear from the enormous variations from all printed editions, must have been transcribed from some independent version, and it seems more than probable from an ancient playhouse copy.

In addition to these notable MSS. there are a fine

copy of the folio edition of 1623; a "Hamlet," 1607, 1637, 1676; the second part of "King Henry VI.," 1619; "King Lear," of 1608; "The Merchant of Venice," of 1600; as well as a "Romeo and Juliet," 1599; and a very interesting collection of wardrobe and property bills of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, dating from 1713 to 1716.

Of great interest outside the more domestic portion of the castle is Cæsar's Tower, in the dungeons of which so many persons during past ages must have been confined, some of them doubtless never to be released save to go to execution. The dungeon—on the walls of which are rudely scratched inscriptions, drawings of bows and arrows, crucifixes, and coats-of-arms—is a strong, stone-vaulted chamber 17 feet by 13 feet and 14 feet 6 inches high. The roof is groined in two bays, and on the south side is a plain semicircular opening, admitting a beam of light from a deeply splayed window about 6 inches wide. On the same side of the dungeon is a passage cut off from the prison by an iron grating, so as to prevent access.

From the top of Guy's Tower, which is reached by a staircase of one hundred and thirty-three steps, there is a fine general view of the castle itself, as well as the wide prospect of the surrounding country A noticeable feature of the tower is the immense strength of the vault beneath it, which would apparently point to the fact that in olden days some heavy engine for the purpose of slinging stones must have been placed upon the roof. In the tower there are five

floors, each having a groined roof, and subdivided into one large and two small rooms, the sides of which in most cases are pierced with numerous loopholes for bowmen commanding in all directions the curtains which the tower was built to protect.

Any mention of Warwick Castle without a reference to the celebrated Warwick Vase, one of the most remarkable remains of the art of ancient Greece, would be incomplete. This fine vase, which was purchased by the second Earl of Warwick from his uncle Sir William Hamilton, is not in the castle itself, but in the conservatory standing in the grounds beyond the stone bridge spanning the moat, which was built to replace the ancient drawbridge. The inscription on the pedestal runs, "This monument of ancient art and Roman splendour was dug out of the ruins of the Tiburtine Villa, the favourite retreat of Hadrian Augustus, that it was restored by the order of Sir William Hamilton, Ambassador from George III., King of Great Britain, to Ferdinand IV., King of Sicily, who sent it home, and was by him dedicated to the ancestral or national genius of liberal arts in 1774."

The romantic story of the vase runs as follows. During some excavations which were being carried out in the bed of a small lake called Pantinello near Tivoli, about sixteen miles from Rome, in 1770, the workmen unearthed the vase. How it came to be at the bottom of this lake has never been discovered and, indeed, can even scarcely be conjectured. But in view of the fact that Hadrian's Villa was, in the year A.D. 546,

occupied by Totila, King of the Goths, who was laying siege to Rome at that time, it may be that the vase was cast into the lake by Adrian's orders to save it from the invaders.

The villa itself was finished about A.D. 138, but the vase is undoubtedly of considerably earlier date, and by some authorities is considered to have been the work of a Greek artist, Lysippus of Sicyon, who lived at the close of the fourth century, when a more elegant style was just replacing the more severe types of art of Phydias and his school. The vase is circular in form, 5 feet 6 inches high and 5 feet 8 inches in diameter, and is constructed of white marble. The base or pedestal on which it stands is modern. The handles of the vase are formed of vine stems, smaller branches of which run round the upper lip, and from which depend bunches of grapes so as to form a frieze. Covering the lower rim are two tiger and panther skins, of which the heads and four paws adorn the sides of the vase, the hind legs interlacing and hanging down between the handles. The heads of Sileni or male attendants of Bacchus are arranged along the tiger skins, with one exception of a female head, probably that of a Bacchante or faun.

With regard to this head, however, some authorities have held that it is a modern restoration, and represents Sir William Hamilton's wife Emma—of Nelson fame. Between the heads are thyrsi or Bacchic rods entwined with ivy and vine shoots, and litui or augural wands used in taking omens. The capacity of the vase is more than one hundred and sixty gallons, and the use to which it

was put or for which it was intended has been the subject of much speculation.

With the many tragedies and pageants which have in the dark ages of the pre-Medieval period down to the golden age of Elizabeth taken place within the enduring walls of this ancient stronghold, it is impossible to deal here. But in this ancient feudal castle the student, artist, and lover of the past will recognise one of the finest monuments in England of ancient splendour which yet remains happily largely uninjured by time. In it we have also an almost unique memorial of that transition period when the more severe and forbidding features of fortress-dwellings were being slowly replaced by others of a more domestic if not the less imposing character.

UFTON.

CHAPTER V

COVENTRY: ITS HISTORY, ROMANCE, CHURCHES, AND ANCIENT BUILDINGS

THE ancient city of Coventry—situated amidst sylvan scenery of great beauty, should if possible be approached by the wayfarer from Kenilworth along the unrivalled avenue which is also the high road—is of great antiquity and of very considerable interest to the archæologist. Seen from a distance, on account of its many church spires, it presents a wonderfully picturesque appearance ; and with its old-world survivals in the shape of timbered houses and the exquisite architecture of its churches, is one of the most interesting towns of the Midlands.

One derivation of the name is generally supposed to indicate that it was originally Couentre ; the first syllable representing a convent, with the addition of the British affix "tre," meaning a town. Other authorities appear, however, to think that the name was derived from Cune, the Celtic name of the River Sherbourne, on which the town stands, and the affix "tre," as already explained. At any rate the town is of great antiquity, and is generally supposed to have been founded by the

Britons, although it is agreed that its history cannot be traced with any great degree of accuracy prior to about 1016, when, according to Rous the historian, Canute, King of Denmark, during his invasion of Mercia amongst other ravages destroyed a nunnery, which at that period had been founded at Coventry. The same authority further states that no attempt was made to restore or rebuild this establishment until about the middle of the same century, when Leofric, then Earl of Mercia, and his Countess, the famous Godiva, founded a Benedictine monastery on a site half a mile to the south of the original Saxon Nunnery of St. Osburg.

It appears that Leofric not only bestowed upon the monastery half of the entire town, but also gave to it in the reign of Edward the Confessor no less than twenty-four other towns in the county of Warwick and elsewhere. Leofric's lady, Godiva, also enriched this foundation with much treasure, searching throughout the country for "skilful goldsmiths, who, with all the gold and silver she had, made crosses, images of saints, and other curious ornaments, which she devoutly disposed thereto."

Leofric died in 1057, and was buried in one of the porches of the church of the monastery which he had founded, which ultimately became the Cathedral of the diocese, a proud position it held until the bishopric was removed to Lichfield. His Countess survived him many years, but the date of her death is not recorded, although it is known that she was buried in the same church.

Countess Godiva

It was Leofric's Countess Godiva or Godeva around whom the well-known legend centres. Although there seems little doubt that it had less foundation in fact than the romantic desire, it was certainly an accepted legend and believed by many as embodying an historical fact in the early part of the reign of Edward the Confessor.

The first description of this somewhat apocryphal ride is to be found in the writings of Roger of Wendover, a chronicler of the beginning of the twelfth century; that is to say of a date about one hundred years after the time when the event is said to have taken place. The account given by this writer, whose work generally we are bound to state is open to considerable question on the score of accuracy, runs as follows :—

The Countess Godiva, who was a great lover of God's mother, longing to free the town of Coventry from the oppression of a heavy toll, and even with urgent prayers besought her husband, with every regard to Jesus Christ and His mother, he would free the town from that service, and from all other heavy burdens; and when the Earl sharply rebuked her for foolishly asking what was so much to his damage he always forbade her for evermore to speak to him on the subject; and while she, on the other hand, with a woman's pertinacity, never ceased to exasperate her husband with that matter, he at last made her this answer—

"Mount your horse and ride naked before all the people, through the market of the town from one end to the other, and on your return you shall have your request."

To which Godiva replied :—

"But will you give me permission if I am willing to do it?"

"I will," said he.

Whereupon the Countess, beloved of God, loosed her hair and let down her tresses, which covered the whole of her body like a veil, and then mounting her horse and attended by two knights she rode through the market-place without being seen, except her fair legs; and having completed the journey, she returned with gladness to her astonished husband, and obtained of him what she had asked, for Earl Leofric freed the town of Coventry and its inhabitants from the aforesaid service, and confirmed what he had done by a charter.

Into this ancient version of the "Godiva legend" more modern elaborations have been imported. These, stating nothing of Godiva's garment formed by her own tresses, record that the people being forewarned of the Countess's intentions all remained indoors behind closed shutters, out of respect for her and her desire to serve them; and in consequence she rode unobserved except by one inquisitive tailor, whose Christian name was Tom. It is he who has been handed down to posterity and obloquy under the nick-name of "Peeping Tom," whose eyes as a punishment for his curiosity and indiscretion are said to have either dropped out of his head or were smitten with blindness!

Unhappily this romantic story, which casts a side-light upon the manners and morals of those early times, and also upon the attitude of husbands towards their wives, is open to grave criticism regarding its authenticity. Indeed, most authorities are inclined to believe that at all events the part relating to "Peeping Tom" is of no greater antiquity than the reign of Charles II., and that the remainder of the story does not date earlier

than King John, at least one hundred and fifty years later than the date of Godiva's traditional ride.

That this story of Godiva's self-sacrifice in the interests of the oppressed inhabitants of Coventry has very little foundation on actual fact is proved by several circumstances ; the chief of which are, that other more trustworthy chroniclers, who, writing at the actual period when the event is supposed to have taken place, whilst recording fully the many good actions which the Earl and Countess undoubtedly did perform, make no mention of Godiva's ride. Another fact is that the population of Coventry was so small at that period that there was scarcely likely to have been in existence a market of the size suggested by Roger of Wendover, and, indeed, hardly a town at all through which Godiva could have ridden. Yet another circumstance is that with so small a place a mere toll would have been a matter of such small consequence, when the majority of the people were serfs, that Leofric would certainly have remitted it without exacting such a condition from his wife. There are, indeed, several versions in different countries of legends closely allied in general detail to that of Godiva, and it is more than probable that this particular one is of great antiquity, which became tacked on to the life of this famous woman without any real foundation in fact.

The mention of Coventry in the Domesday Book, which was written nearly thirty years later than Leofric's death, describes the place, even with its fine monastery, which Leofric founded, as little more than a small agri-

cultural village, with a population probably of not more than three hundred to three hundred and fifty souls. Most of the houses at that far-off period were the merest hovels, without windows ; whilst nearly all the adult inhabitants, save the very aged, were engaged in agricultural occupations.

By the year 1218, when Henry III. granted a charter for a yearly fair, lasting eight days, Coventry must of course have grown very considerably ; and it is interesting to know that it was in connection with this fair in 1677, that the legend of Countess Godiva's ride took form as a pageant and procession, the last of which took place on August 2, 1892. On that occasion the rôle of the self-sacrificing Countess of ancient times was played by a young lady attired in fleshings and a short jerkin-like garment of white satin, who also wore a pair of white kid gloves, a plume, and a flaxen wig !

Sixteen years after the institution of the fair the Franciscans or Grey Friars founded an establishment in Coventry ; and their coming was followed about ten years later by the Carmelites or White Friars ; and in 1381 there was also a settlement of Carthusians near the south-east gate. Edward III., in 1344, constituted in the city a Municipal Corporation by letters patent, and for the better security of Coventry the inhabitants obtained from the same King permission to levy a toll towards the expense of fortifying and enclosing the town, to be commenced twenty-seven years after the grant was obtained. It appears, however, that the fortifications were commenced in 1355, and the walls and gates were

finished in the time of Richard II. With the walling in of Coventry the merchants of the period became enriched, the town flourished and extended, and the beautiful steeple of St. Michael's Church was designed and partly finished. In addition to this, the staple manufacture of clothing was cultivated, and public buildings of adequate importance began to be constructed.

It was just outside the city, on Gosford Green, that the famous meeting took place in September 1397, between Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV., and Thomas de Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, to which encounter Shakespeare himself refers in "King Richard II." The duel, which the King commanded to be fought on this spot, arose from a quarrel between the ducal combatants, Hereford having accused Norfolk of speaking disrespectfully of his Sovereign. Richard and a great number of the nobility had gathered in the brilliant sunshine of that September day on the triangular piece of greensward where two of the greatest nobles of the realm were to engage in single combat, the trial by combat of those far-off days. But just as the champions were about to commence hostilities Richard suddenly placed his veto upon the encounter and banished both of the disputants from England; Hereford for ten years, and Norfolk for life.

It was in 1451 that Henry VI. conferred on Coventry and certain contiguous villages the honour of being constituted a county of themselves, and the

charter which made this enactment provided that the bailiffs of the city should be also sheriffs of the county, and that the same coroner should preside over both. Edward IV. confirmed the charter, and in the agricultural survey of Warwickshire, it is mentioned that the county and city of Coventry, situated in the north-east part of Warwickshire, with "the greatest length from Bedworth, to a point named Baginton, in a north-east and south-west direction, is $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles; and the greatest breadth, from Nettlehill to Brownshill Green, in about an east and west direction, is $7\frac{1}{4}$ miles."

Exhall, Keresley, Anstey, Foleshill, Stivichall, Stoke, a part of Sow, and Wyken, are all united with the city to form the county of Coventry. The Quarter Sessions were, prior to 1842, held with the same full powers as counties at large, and the men and aldermen of the city had considerable privileges as well as being Justices of the Peace.

It was in the Priory that Henry VI. held a second Parliament in the year 1459, known to the Yorkists as the "Parliamentum Diabolicum," this name being given to the assembly on account of the large number of attainders which were passed by it against the Yorkists, including Richard, Duke of York, and the Earls of March, Salisbury, and Warwick.

Afterwards King Edward IV. and his Queen spent the Christmas festival in the city in 1465, evidently with the intention of winning over the citizens to the Yorkist side; but it is recorded that even the presence

KENILWORTH CASTLE.

of the King and Queen was not sufficient to alienate their affections from the House of Lancaster.

Four years later the outskirts of Coventry was the scene of one of the too frequent tragedies of those unsettled times, when Earl Rivers and his son were beheaded at Gosford Green by the orders of Sir John Coniers, who had obtained some partial success in Oxfordshire. In the following year, 1470, the Earl of Warwick, on his return from France, entered Coventry, which was still Lancastrian in sympathy, with much war material and hostile intentions to the inhabitants. On hearing of the Earl of Warwick's presence King Edward, who lay at Leicester with his forces, marched thence, and after resting at Coombe Abbey, proceeded to Gosford Green, and then approaching Coventry demanded admission ; but this being refused, he continued his march to Warwick. Later on, when he had won the decisive battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury, and had regained power, Edward, in revenge for the action of the people of Coventry in refusing to receive him in the previous year, deprived them of many of their privileges and levied upon them a considerable fine, amounting to five hundred marks. But the King soon realised that the good-will of the townsfolk was of too great importance for him to risk losing it by undue severity ; and, therefore, on payment of the fine, their privileges of which they had been deprived were again restored to them.

Four years later Edward kept the Feast of St. George at Coventry, and in the same year his son stood

as godfather to the Mayor's child, and was presented with a cup and a hundred guineas, and also made a brother of the Guilds of Corpus Christi and Holy Trinity.

Richard II. also visited the city, and Henry VII. came and lodged at the Mayor's immediately after the decisive victory over Richard III. at Bosworth Field.

It would appear that the people of Coventry of these days were opulent and generous, but exercised little originality in the form of the gifts they bestowed upon royal or distinguished visitors, for, like Prince Edward of York a few years previously, Henry VII. was presented with a cup and a hundred guineas, and seems to have made so favourable an impression upon the townsfolk that they a few years later subscribed £1100 towards the tax which was levied for the purpose of defraying the expense of the King's expedition to France.

Henry VIII. and Catherine of Arragon visited Coventry in 1510, and witnessed three magnificent pageants; and it is possible that the prosperity of the town, which was popularly attributed as chiefly owing to the magnitude and wealth of its monastic institutions, may have suggested to the King's mind the idea of the ultimate suppression of these foundations. Be it as it may, it was stated by one John Hales, Esq., to the Protector Somerset, "that in consequence of the Dissolution trade grew so low, and there was such a dispersion of people from this city, that there were not even 3000 inhabitants, whereas there had been formerly 15,000." Although this picture of the desolation

wrought by the suppression of the religious houses is probably painted in too vivid colours, there seems little doubt that great distress resulted in the years immediately following the arbitrary action of Henry VIII.'s minister Cromwell, for we find that although at least one branch of commerce, the clothing trade, was still flourishing, a charter for an additional fair was granted to alleviate the distress of the remaining inhabitants.

One of the great features of Coventry life in the Middle Ages was undoubtedly the wealth and influence of the numerous bodies called Guilds, which were of both a religious and secular character, and to the support of these must be attributed much of the fame that distinguished Coventry for its " mysteries " or sacred plays. These dramatic performances, which partook of much of the character of that most interesting and popular survival of the present day " Everyman," took place on movable platforms which were drawn through the principal streets and open places. The subjects of these plays were generally Scriptural or semi-Scriptural in character, and the different festivals, more especially that of Corpus Christi, were popular days for the representations. In addition to these there was at Coventry the play on Hock Tuesday, which was founded upon incidents of the Massacre of the Danes, and also pageants which were performed on the occasion of Royal visits, and at other special times.

On the occasion of Queen Elizabth's visit to Coventry in 1565, during one of her progresses she was received by the sheriffs in scarlet cloaks and a

score of young men on horseback, clad in a livery of fine purple. The Queen was met at the limits of the liberties of the city in the direction of Wolvey, and each of the young men presented to the Queen a white rod, which she receiving delivered to them again, and they then rode before her until they came near the city, when the Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet cloaks came out to receive her. As was the custom in these times a presentation of money was made; the Recorder, we learn, presenting "a purse, supposed to be worth twenty marks, and in it £100 in angels, which the Queen accepting was pleased to say to her lords: "It is a good gift, a hundred pounds in gold; I have but few such gifts."

To which the Mayor answering boldly, replied: "If it please your Grace, there is a good deal more in it."

"What is that?" said she.

"The hearts," he replied, "of all your loving subjects."

"We thank you, Mr. Mayor," said the Queen."

This at any rate is a much more courtier-like account of the presentation than that recorded by another writer, by whom the Mayor is said to have made the following rhyming address to the Queen, which, if the idea is based on fact at all, is probably a travesty fabricated at a later date:—

"We men of Coventree
Are very glad to see
Your gracious Majesty,
Good Lord, how fair ye bee!"

To which somewhat over-bold remark the Queen is stated to have replied sarcastically :—

"Your gracious Majesty
Is very glad to see
Ye men of Coventree,
Good lack, what fools ye bee!"

In the year previous to the Queen's visit the plague had committed great ravages in the city, hundreds of the inhabitants falling victims, and the "dreadful dead carts passing constantly through the streets taking their horrible toll from most houses, and picking up those who had fallen of the sickness in the streets." Thus with the clothing business falling to decay without any substitute being introduced to fill its place, and suffering from the suppression of the religious houses, Coventry was in but a poor state at the time of Elizabeth's visit. The Recorder's speech, however, which was very lugubrious, probably exaggerated the situation, although, as Mr. Brewer says, "the ardour of the natives had been damped when they saw the gorgeous piles of religious splendour, so long their pride and boast, one vast heap of ruins."

The Queen during her visit lodged at the White Friars, then a residence of the Hales family, and was, notwithstanding the reputed decay and poverty of the times, entertained with lavish magnificence.

The next Royal visitor within the city walls had no pageants, addresses, or honours showered upon her, but hapless Mary Queen of Scots was brought to Coventry and shut up a prisoner in the Mayor's parlour

during the year following the coming of her royal cousin. Again, three years later, in 1569, she was brought to Coventry and incarcerated in the Bull Inn (the site of which is now occupied by the Barracks), and kept under the charge of the Earls of Shrewsbury and Huntingdon. The citizens had during her incarceration within their walls the melancholy and troublesome task of keeping watch and ward night and day at each of the gates, so that none might pass to or fro without good cause.

In 1610 King James I., in a letter addressed to the heads of the city and the Church, commanded that the inhabitants should kneel whilst receiving the sacrament, and when they several years later applied to him for a renewal of their charter the King refused to grant it until he had been satisfied that his command regarding their kneeling when receiving of the sacrament had been obeyed. A few years later the King visited Coventry and was presented with what must be almost considered the inevitable £100, and in addition thereto with a silver cup of fine workmanship weighing forty-five ounces, out of which, the King exclaimed, that he would drink wherever he went.

During the succeeding reign and the Civil War which broke out, Coventry attached itself to the side of Parliament; the influence of Lord Brooke of Warwick overpowering that of the Earl of Northampton, who was Recorder and a staunch Royalist. At the outset of the war, King Charles, after he had raised his standard at Nottingham, sent to Coventry and

demanded quarters, and these being refused he attacked the city in full force and succeeded in capturing one of the gates. He was, however, finally repulsed with considerable loss, and obliged to abandon his attempt to take the town. For this act of contumacy and the fact that it was garrisoned by Parliamentary troops until the Restoration it was destined to suffer later on. Charles II., notwithstanding the enthusiastic demonstrations of the inhabitants at his restoration and the surrender of possessions which the city had originally purchased from the Crown, did not forget the part Coventry had played during the Civil War, and a commission held in 1662 prescribed the demolition of the city walls as a mark of the King's displeasure for the disloyalty of the inhabitants to his father. This act was immediately put into effect by the Earl of Northampton. All that now remains of the fortifications are two of the gates, Cook Street Gate, now a mere roofless shell, and the Swanswell or Priory Gate in Hales Street, which after the archway had been blocked up some years ago was converted into dwellings.

Twenty-five years later, when King James II. visited Coventry, the citizens, no doubt remembering the exactions and punishment under which they suffered in the previous reign for their old-time disloyalty to the Crown, paid the King the greatest marks of attention and respect. They presented him with a gold cup and cover, and even went the length of smoothing the rough surfaces of their streets with sand, white-washing their houses, and decorating them with garlands and

flags. Occasionally interesting relics of the Roman occupation are discovered when excavating foundations for new buildings, and when laying out new roads.

Rich in ancient buildings Coventry is full of interest to the students of medieval architecture and to the archæologist. Of the ancient monastery church of the Grey Friars, which was built in the reign of Edward III., little now remains save the beautiful octagonal tower and spire, which rises to a height of upwards of 200 feet. This church became so rich in later years from the gifts bestowed upon it by various benefactors that the historian William of Malmesbury writes of it: "It was enriched and beautified with so much gold and silver that the walls seemed too narrow to contain it; insomuch that Robert de Limesie, Bishop of this diocese in the time of King William Rufus, scraped from one beam that separated the shrines 500 marks of silver." The church was also a rich storehouse of relics, amongst which, placed in a beautiful silver shrine, was an arm of St. Augustine, and on the casket containing it was a notification of its purchase from the Pope by Agelnethus, Archbishop of Canterbury.

After the suppression of the monasteries the site and remains of the church were granted about 1542 to the Mayor and Corporation, and, as was the case with many other similar buildings, the partially ruined church served for a long period as a quarry from which the inhabitants appear to have drawn building materials for their own houses.

STONELEIGH ABBEY.

Fortunately, however, the elegant tower escaped. It was ultimately and for many years surrounded by an orchard, which belonged to a nurseryman who turned the lower portion of the tower into a piggery, and who used to laughingly boast that he possessed the tallest pig-sty in the country. In the early years of the last century the idea of building on a new church to the old tower presented itself to the minds of some Coventry people, and the Corporation released their rights to the tower for the purpose. The work, which was commenced in 1829, was finished three years later. The idea, we believe, was to erect this church in the style of the original, but one can scarcely credit that this intention was carried out if one may at the same time accept the statement that the ancient building was of such elegance and beauty as chroniclers have recorded.

In St. Michael's Church one has, however, an early and remarkably beautiful example of Perpendicular architecture, the tower and spire of which is almost world-famed.

In the reign of King Stephen a grant was made to the prior of the neighbouring Benedictine monastery, and this constitutes the earliest mention of the church. Of the original building, which was of Norman design, only a few fragments have from time to time been discovered, and the first church was susperseded in the thirteenth century by one of Early English design, of which nothing except some portions of the walls, the south-west doorway, and the south porch remain at the present day.

The present beautiful church was probably erected between the year 1373 and the first half of the next century, its founders being members of a family named Botoner. William and Adam Botoner were not only prosperous merchants and notable citizens of Coventry, but had each of them the unusual distinction of filling the office of Mayor three times. The munificence of the family, tradition asserts, was perpetuated by a brass tablet which was formerly affixed in the church, and bore the following inscription :—

William and Adam built the tower,
Ann and Mary built the spire ;
William and Adam built the church,
Ann and Mary built the quire.

Strange to relate, the tower was the first part of the church to be commenced, and this, finished in 1394, had its cost defrayed by the two brothers we have mentioned, who made yearly payments for the purpose of £100. Thirty-eight years later the spire was commenced by the sisters Ann and Mary, but the date of its completion is uncertain. Two years after the commencement of the spire these benevolent women undertook the building of the central aisle.

The tower is built in four stages, and has a height of 136 feet ; the two upper stages are pierced with windows and beautified with panelling and canopied niches, which contain a considerable number of figures ; the latter are a somewhat cosmopolitan collection, made up chiefly of saints, but also comprising statuettes of

members of the Botoner family we have before referred to, Lady Godiva, her husband, and several English kings and their wives. The flying buttresses supporting the tower are of very great beauty and grace, two springing from each pinnacle of the main tower and resting against the angles of the octagonal lantern, above which rises the beautiful spire to a further height of 130 feet, the total elevation of the whole being just over 300 feet.

Although the spire is still of great beauty much of the detail of the original ornamentation has unfortunately disappeared, owing to the soft nature of the stone used in its construction.

The total length of the church is 293 feet, with a greatest width of 127 feet, the nave being 50 feet in height. The interior, with its long range of slender columns in the nave, and the number of large windows and the fine timbered roof, has a very beautiful effect. The chapels of the various Guilds now form the north and south outer aisles, and still go by the names which they bore at the time the members of these various organisations were in the habit of worshipping in them.

Beginning with those on the south side, next the tower, the first is the Dyers' Chapel, on the walls of which are some interesting monuments dating from the early years of the seventeenth century onwards. Next comes the Cappers' Room, over the south porch, with the chapel devoted to the same Guild, and known as St. Thomas', on the east side. The Mercers' Chapel, near by, also contains some interesting monuments of the

sixteenth century, worthy of attention as marking, both in their style and the inscriptions they bear, the florid spirit of the times. From this chapel a flight of steps leads down into the vestry, an extension of the ancient sacristy, which tradition asserts was used sometimes as a prison ; carved on the wall of which is a crucifix, supposed to be the work of some prisoner confined for an ecclesiastical offence.

The apse of the church, formerly the Lady Chapel, contains nothing of any great note save the fragments of ancient stained glass collected from various windows in other portions of the church, now placed in a few of those of the apse.

The reredos is partly Early English, and partly Decorated in style, and the eastern compartments contain some good sculpture. The Drapers' Chapel, which is situated in the north aisle, is of considerable artistic interest, as it contains thirteen stalls which have finely carved standards and *misereres* or folding seats, the under portions of which are ornamented with humorous designs. On the north wall of the chapel is an ancient brass, dating about 1506, to the memory of Thomas Bond, Mayor of Coventry in 1497, and founder of the Bablake Hospital. Next is St. Lawrence's Chapel, followed by the Girdlers' Chapel ; and last of all the Smiths' or St. Andrew's Chapel, containing some interesting tombs removed from their original position in the Drapers' Chapel.

The pulpit, though a fine one, is modern ; but the font at the west end of the chancel is in all probability the one given by John Cross, then Mayor of Coventry,

to the church in 1394; it bears on a small brass plate a shield containing four crosses, the ancient merchants' mark.

Almost a rival to St Michael's, at least in interest if not in beauty, is the church of the Holy Trinity, the date of the original foundation of which is unknown, but certain portions of the present building in and above the north porch probably date from about the middle of the thirteenth century, at which time the church was joined to the priory. It is an undoubted fact, however, that a much earlier building must have existed on the same spot. The present church, which is 178 feet long and 67 feet broad, probably dates from a short time before that of St. Michael's, and differs very much from it both as regards its form and construction. In shape it is cruciform, and consists of a nave with north and south aisles, a chancel with chapels, and transepts. The tower and spire are situated in the centre, and are supported on four arches, springing from massive but well-proportioned piers. The ancient spire was blown down during the terrific hurricane of January 24, 1665, the church being greatly damaged by its fall. The task of rebuilding it and repairing the injury done to the church was commenced almost immediately, and so rapidly did the work proceed that the spire was completed in two years to a height of 237 feet, which is supposed to be somewhat greater than that of the one destroyed.

Over the north porch, which is the most ancient portion of the present church, is situated a domus or priest's chamber, the east side window of which

was formerly a doorway leading into St. Thomas' Chapel.

Prior to the Reformation there were a large number of chapels and altars attached to Holy Trinity, the chief of which were the Marlers' or Mercers' Chapel to the east of the transept ; the chapel of Our Lady, now forming the choir vestry, anciently a continuation of the south chancel aisles ; the Butchers' Chapel ; the Jesus Chapel in the south transept ; and the Tanners' or Barkers' Chapel in the south aisle of the nave.

In 1831 a fresco, illustrative of the Last Judgment, was discovered in the space over the west arch under the tower. This survival, which was probably white-washed over during Puritan times, has unfortunately deteriorated and become almost indistinguishable. The picture when discovered depicted the Saviour in the centre, seated on a rainbow, and flanked on either side by six apostles ; at a slightly lower position were figures of the Virgin Mary and St. John the Baptist ; two angels with trumpets were sounding the summons to judgment, and the dead were seen issuing from their tombs. On the right hand of the Saviour was the figure of a pope entering Paradise, while on the left were figures of doomed spirits being dragged to torment.

The clerestory of the church is of the Perpendicular period, and is divided into eight bays, each containing two windows. The pulpit, attached to the south-east pier of the tower, is noticeable as being a fine specimen of stone-work in the Perpendicular style. The font, which stands on its original base of two steps, has sunk

panels painted and gilt in the Decorated style. The brass eagle is of far greater interest than usually attaches to these things, owing to the fact that it is contemporary in date with the church itself, and is also one of the earliest examples of core casting.

A considerable amount of romance is connected with this lectern, for in 1560 an entry is found in which it is stated that xvjd were expended "for mendyng of ye Eagle's tayle," which had been damaged, possibly at the time of the suppression of the monasteries. This self-same eagle was threatened with even greater risk of destruction during the Commonwealth, for we find an entry in the vestry book of the date of July 13, 1654, which states "that Mr. Abraham Watts made a motion, that whereas he was informed that this House had an intention to sell the brass Eagle standing in the vestrie, that he might have the refusall thereof when such shall be mede." An additional entry running, "Agreed, that if it be sold, he shall have the refusall thereof." At the time when the lectern was nearly sold, the font, being in those times considered an objectionable survival of Romanism, was removed and an ordinary vessel was provided for use at baptisms. It was, however, fortunately preserved, and brought back and set up in its original position after the Restoration.

The handsome reredos was erected in 1873 by Sir Gilbert G. Scott, R.A., and represents the Crucifixion in the centre, with the Nativity and Ascension on either side.

An event of more than passing interest in connection with the church was the marriage, recorded in the register, of Sarah Kemble—afterwards the famous Mrs. Siddons — with William Siddons, an actor in the theatrical company of the bride's father, which was at the time performing in the Drapers' Hall.

The Church of John the Baptist, also known as Bablake Church, is one well worth visiting, especially by students of architecture and archaeology. It possesses a fine lantern tower with battlements springing from the centre of the church. Since 1774 it has been the Parish Church.

Coventry, famous in the past for its religious foundations and ecclesiastical architecture, was not perhaps less notable for its buildings of a purely domestic or municipal character, and happily not a few of these have survived, either complete or in part, to provide object lessons for the student and the lover of antiquities.

Amongst the beautiful buildings which make this town still one of the most interesting in the Midlands, is St. Mary's Hall, hard by the church of St. Michael. This fine and ancient building, which, however, from the dilapidation of the stone-work front, possesses a somewhat heavy and decayed appearance from the outside, and is too closely surrounded by other buildings for a good general view to be obtained, was commenced towards the end of the fourteenth century, and completed in 1414 by the united Guilds of St. Mary, St. John the Baptist, St. Catherine, and Holy Trinity, known as the Trinity Guild. Unfortunately, the front and the tower at the south-west angle has

THE PARADE, LEAMINGTON.

been allowed to fall into decay, the two upper stories of the latter having long ago vanished.

The courtyard is entered through the depressed archway leading into a finely vaulted porch, on the central boss of the groining of which is an interesting carving representing the coronation of the Virgin, and on the projecting impost of the inward arch on the right hand is a representation of the Annunciation; whilst the impost on the opposite side is ornamented with animal grotesques. There is a lofty room on the east side of the porch, which was formerly the chapel of the Mercers' Company. The courtyard lies beyond this, and on the western side of it is the entrance to the crypt beneath the Great Hall. Near the windows of the crypt are the ancient lockers, used for the safe custody of documents and other valuables belonging to members of the Guild. In the smaller chamber next the street are several relics, not the least interesting of which is the knave's post, a figure six feet high, having arm openings, which was removed from a wall in Much Park Street in 1886. It came originally from one of the religious houses, and was the goal of offenders, who, sentenced to be whipped at the cart's tail, usually started from the Mayor's parlour in Cross Cheaping, to which they were sometimes also whipped back. The last occasion on which a public whipping was given is supposed to have been between the years 1820 and 1830. The old Coventry stocks, which are also to be found in this room, formerly standing in the market-place, and last used in July 1861, are

threefold, which speaks but ill for the conduct of the town.

The south end of the inner court is the kitchen, which was originally the hall of the Merchants' or St. Mary's Guild, turned to its present use when the new hall was erected. Unfortunately the chamber has suffered considerably at various times from repairs and structural alterations. It contains four great chimneys, with an opening in the roof to allow of the escape of steam. In the lobby on the eastern side of the court-yard is an interesting statue, which, however, has been considerably restored and is generally believed to represent Henry VI. It once formed one of the chief figures on the ancient city Cross in Cross Cheaping, which was unfortunately demolished in 1771. Dugdale wrote of it as "one of the chief things wherein this city most glories, which for workmanship and beauty is inferior to none in England."

From the lobby a broad staircase leads up to the vestibule, and thus to the Great Hall, in which so many historic scenes in past times have taken place. Up these stairs in ancient days passed the leading citizens of Coventry, and also, in all likelihood, some at least of the royal and famous visitors who have at various times been received by the town. The great hall, which is some 70 feet long, 30 feet broad, and 34 feet high, is lighted by seven Perpendicular windows, three on either side, each containing four lights, and mullioned and transomed, and a fine nine-light window set in the northern end. This latter is filled with ancient stained

glass, the upper portion with nineteen coats of arms, and the lower containing a number of full length representations of kings, amongst whom are William I., Richard I., Henry III., Henry IV., Henry V., Henry VI., Constantine the Great, King Arthur, and one unidentified. The glass is by the John Thornton who was a native of Coventry, and also the artist of the magnificent east window in York Minster. The roof of this beautiful hall is of oak, very richly carved, with the space above the tie beams filled with open panel-work. In the centre are full-length figures of angels, symbolical of the Heavenly Hosts, bearing in their hands musical instruments ; whilst the bosses at the intersection of the ribs are also richly carved.

The tapestry hanging below the north window, which is beautiful work, although of Flemish design, was probably made in England either in the last years of the fifteenth or commencement of the sixteenth century. One thing is clear from the lines of the divisions corresponding with the mullions in the window above, namely, that it was originally made for the purpose to which it is applied. There are three compartments, each of them divided into an upper and lower tier, and the subject of the tapestry is popularly supposed to represent incidents of the visit paid by Henry VI. and his Queen Margaret to Coventry on September 21, 1451, on which occasion they were the guests of the Prior of the Benedictines. Not only is this tapestry of great antiquarian interest, but it is also valuable as representing some of the famous people of

Henry VI.'s reign and the costumes of that and of other days. Especially to be noted are the subjects occupying the centre compartment, which relate to the connection of the building with the Trinity Guild, and that also of the Guild of St. Mary which was incorporated with it. One strange anachronism in connection with the pictures in the first tier of the first compartment is the representation of Duke Humphrey and Cardinal Beaufort as being present at the time of the visit of King Henry. Both of these predeceased the occasion by several years, and probably the explanation of their presence is the fact that the work was undertaken and completed a considerable time after the visit of the King.

In the upper row of the middle compartment is a figure of Justice enthroned, surrounding which are angels holding in their hands the instruments of the Passion. It is supposed that this incongruity was due to the insertion of the figure of Justice in Puritan times, and authorities differ in their views as to whether the evidently offending and deleted figure was that of the Trinity or Christ. Mr. Scharf, who has made a close study of this particular work, is of the opinion that the remains of the handsome throne and part of a beautiful embroidered mantle which are depicted, may have belonged to a seated figure of Christ clad in flowing robes, often the subject of paintings at that particular period. His argument, which is as follows, indeed seems to be a weighty one. He writes, "had it been a representation of the

Trinity with the first Person holding a crucifix, I do not think we should have had the angels with the instruments of the Passion, but rather the four emblems of the Evangelists, as on the canopy of the tomb of the Black Prince at Canterbury, and in various MS. illuminations."

Whatever may be the true explanation of this inserted and incongruous figure, one cannot feel other than satisfaction that the mutilation of the tapestry, permitted by Puritan fanaticism, did not proceed to greater lengths.

In the hall are a number of royal portraits, including pictures of Charles II. and James II. by Lely, and of George III. and George IV. by Sir Thomas Lawrence; and on the walls are also some Latin inscriptions, including one surmounted by the letters E.R. celebrating Queen Elizabeth, and another commemorating the Black Prince.

Within recent years a new fireproof Muniment Room has been built downstairs, where is kept a most valuable and interesting series of documents. Earliest of these is a charter received from Ranulph, Earl of Chester, in the reign of Henry II. A similar document of Confirmation, granted in the reign of Charles II., has additional interest from the fact that it contains a fine miniature portrait of the King. In addition to more important documents relative to Coventry affairs are many most interesting and unique letters, some of them of a more or less private character. One in particular from Margaret, the mother of Henry VII.,

calling attention in peremptory language to a former and unanswered letter. There are two communications from Henry VIII., one bearing a written signature and the other stamped with a wooden stamp.

Another exceedingly interesting letter is that received by the Mayor of Coventry in September 1534, dated the 12th of that month, from Ann Boleyn, announcing to him the birth of her daughter Elizabeth, afterwards Queen. There is also one from Elizabeth herself, dated thirty-six years later, relative to the arrival at Coventry of unhappy Mary Queen of Scots.

A strange side light upon the custom of the times is thrown by an indenture dated Warwick, 1478, relating to some jewels which the impecunious Duke of Clarence had pledged to the city. There are other letters from royal personages, including Edward IV., Richard III., Henry VII., James I., Charles II., James II., and from Archbishops Laud and Cranmer, and Richard Baxter. In addition to all these memorials of the past, valuable alike for their historical and antiquarian interest, is a remarkable miscellaneous collection of nearly twenty thousand documents, including deeds of gift, charters, grants, leases, etc., and a set of the trade-marks of Guild members impressed in wax, extending from the reign of Edward I. down to the latter half of the fifteenth century.

At the rear of the Minstrel Gallery is a large room formerly used as the armoury, in which is hung a fine picture, the "Bacchanali," by Luca Giordano, and at the back of these apartments is another room, traditionally

supposed to have been that in which Mary Queen of Scots was confined when at Coventry.

The Mayoress's parlour possesses a fine moulded ceiling, in two compartments, with diagonal ribs united in an octagonal panel. The fireplace has hollow jambs ornamented with tracery, copied from the banqueting hall of Kenilworth Castle, and is formed by a depressed Tudor arch ; and above it is a figure of Godiva on horseback placed in a recess. The elaborately carved state chair of oak undoubtedly dates from the early part of the sixteenth century, and possibly even earlier. On one side is the figure of the Virgin and Child, whilst the other is simply panelled. The back is surmounted on one side by an elephant and castle—the town arms ; and on the other side, which formerly was the centre, stand two lions acting as supporters for a coronet or crown, which has disappeared. The chair when perfect was a double one, and was probably made for the use of the Master of the Guild, and the Mayor, when present at its meetings. On the walls are hung some interesting portraits of royalty and of former mayors of the town.

Amongst the other buildings of Coventry worthy of note as representing survivals of ancient architecture is the Bablake Hospital, endowed by one Thomas Bond in 1506. "For"—as it is quaintly phrased—"ten poore men, so long as the world shall endure, with a woman to look to them." This Thomas Bond was a draper of the city, and also its Mayor, in 1497 ; when Perkin Warbeck was causing rebellion.

Even a brief consideration of Coventry would be incomplete without a mention of the famous Guilds which in medieval times played so prominent a part in its civic history. Of the many founded in the city the oldest of all having a religious character was that of St. Mary, which used to hold its annual meeting of Masters, Brothers, and Sisters on Assumption Day, as the quaint spelling of the time had it, "En sale n're dame," in other words, in St. Mary's Hall.

As showing the power and importance of this Guild, and, indeed, of the Guild system itself in ancient times, one only has to remember the Royal and noble persons who were frequently enrolled as members. Amongst those who became members of the Guild of Holy Trinity were Henry VI. and his Queen, Margaret of Anjou; Henry VII. and his Queen, Elizabeth of York; and Edward V. when he was Prince of Wales. It is interesting also to record that the name of Shakespeare is included among the brothers and sisters of the Guild.

The form of petition for admission into the Guild, and the oath which had to be taken by intending members at the ceremony of their admission, are both quaint; the former runs, "Maister, we beseech you, at the reverence of the Holy Trinity, that you will receive us to be brethren of this place with you." And the latter runs, "Ye shall be good and true, and each of you shall be good and true to the Master of the Gild of the Holy Trinity, Our Lady, St. John and St. Catherine of Coventre, and to all the brethren

ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH, BIRMINGHAM.

and sisters of the same Gild ; and all the good rules and ordinances by the said Master and his Brethren afore this time made, and hereafter to be made, and your days of payment truly for to keep to your power, so God you help and all Saints."

Amongst the other Guilds possessing royal members was that of Corpus Christi, instituted in the reign of Edward III., which rendered assistance to the churches of St. Michael and Holy Trinity, by part payment of the priests ; of this Guild King Edward V. was a member.

The Trade Guilds, of which there were many, one of the oldest being that of the Sheremen and Tailors, founded in honour of the Nativity some time in the reign of Richard II., were very jealous of their privileges, and resented promptly any infringement upon their prerogative. An interesting instance of their action in this respect was afforded by a combination of the Guilds for the purpose of suppressing an imitation guild which some of the young men of the town had formed in the early years of the reign of Henry VI. Dugdale's account of this action runs as follows :—

"The common people," he says, "namely, Journeymen of several trades, observed what merry-meetings and feasts their masters had, by being of those Fraternities, and that they themselves wanted in like pleasure did of their own accord assemble together in several places of the city and especially in St. George's Chapel near Gosford Gate, which occasioned the Mayor and his brethren in the 3rd year of Henry VI. to complain thereof to the King ; alledging, that the said Jour-

neymen in their unlawful meetings called themselves St. George his Gild, to the intent that they might maintain and abet one another in quarrels ; and for their better conjunction had made choyce of a Master, with Clerks and Officers to the great contempt of the K. authority, prejudice of the other Gilds (viz. holy Trin and Corp Christi) and disturbance of the city ; whereupon the King directed his Writ to the Mayor and Justices, with the Bayliffs of this City, commanding them by proclamation to prohibite any more such meetings."

Thus were the perhaps not unnatural desires of young people of the Middle Ages to emulate the gaiety and junketings of their betters crushed by royal authority.

These trading Guilds were almost analogous to the ancient Companies of the City of London, and have in many cases survived to the present time, although nowadays their *raison d'être* is somewhat far to seek, and one is forced to the conclusion that the chief excuse for their continued existence is the feeling that old institutions should not be allowed to disappear, even though the original and perhaps justified reasons for their foundation no longer obtain.

In some of the Guilds great and striking alterations have been made from their aforetime character, although they survive at the present day. The Guild of Fullers or Tailors and Sheremen, one of the most ancient, had at one time only one surviving brother, who nominated a second, and thus it remained until the year 1860, when the number was once more reduced to a single brother, who then made seven others.

Coventry

Coventry, now so essentially a commercial city, in ancient days saw, perhaps, more of change and tragedy than most towns of central England. In the Middle Ages, indeed, stirring events succeeded one another with somewhat startling rapidity within its walls, and public executions were far less uncommon than the inhabitants could have wished. Opposite the old Black Bull Inn, where Henry VI. stayed after the Battle of Bosworth Field, and where Mary Queen of Scots was confined for several months in 1569 (now the site of the Barracks), one Thomas Harrington of Oxford was beheaded in 1487 for having claimed that he was the son of the Duke of Clarence. In the garden known as Park Hollows, near which are some fragments of the ancient city walls, during the Marian Persecution, several martyrs, including Lawrence Sanders, Cornelius Bungey, and Robert Glover were burnt for heresy.

From the town of these days it is a far cry, indeed, to the bustling modern city ; still containing, however, somewhat of the philosophy of ancient civic life, though chiefly concerned with the manufacture of such modern things as bicycles, motors, and aeroplanes.

Even before the Great War the city was a hive of industry, and its rapid growth, and the wide extension of its boundaries have been, indeed, remarkable during the last decade.

To recount Coventry's part in the waging of the Great War would occupy far more space than can be devoted to it in a book like the present ; but many of the most essential elements in the ultimate victory had

their origin in the wonderful activities of the ancient town.

War material, munitions, motor cars, aeroplanes, and petrol engines were turned out in enormous quantities. Thousands of skilled mechanics were drawn off from industry to play a more active part in the war overseas, but the older men, women, boys, and girls took their places, and magnificently carried on the ceaseless activities of providing the munitions of war.

A descriptive writer gave this war-time picture of Coventry. "It is a city of ancient greatness inspired with a spirit so modern as to strike one as being incongruous. There are few lights at night, for it is war time, but at sunset against the pale lemon evening sky its spires are sharply silhouetted, and the lofty chimneys of its restless factories trail diaphanous veils of smoke across the vault of heaven. Even at a distance one hears a murmurous hum of machines, which comes upon the evening air like the hum of innumerable bees. . . . Coventry never sleeps. In the age of the curfew it slept soundly, its streets dark as now. But to-day the work is continuous, for only that way can victory lie."

Yes, Coventry bore its burden, did its share, and played its part.

But, seen from a little distance and from certain aspects, Coventry still possesses a strange old-world charm, and the more modern elements of its present-day life seem to fade away, leaving a picture of elegant spires rising from amid a sea of indistinct and even picturesquely disposed roofs.

CHAPTER VI

KENILWORTH AND ITS PRIORY—THE STORY AND ROMANCE OF KENILWORTH CASTLE

KENILWORTH, which is prettily situated, and lies almost equidistant between Warwick and Coventry, and about five miles direct north of the former town, is reached by the turnpike road passing Guy's Cliff, the beautiful Blakedown Mill, which existed prior to the reign of Henry II., and Chessford Bridge. Few who visit Kenilworth at the present day would imagine that this quiet, straggling country town, with a population of about four thousand, could ever have played the important part it did in the history and romance of the county and the nation at large.

Kenilworth of to-day at first sight gives the traveller the impression of being merely a sleepy town, with the architecture of its long main street, which is a full mile in length, picturesquely broken up by the interspersing of modern and older buildings. Few, indeed, would suppose that any manufacture of the slightest importance could occupy the thoughts or the energies of its inhabitants ; but there are still some carried on amid its rural surroundings.

One of the most interesting buildings in Kenilworth is the old Elizabethan House, standing just beyond the King's Arms Hotel, at which Sir Walter Scott put up when visiting the place in 1820. Over the door of the house, which is of two stories, is a wooden panel on which is carved a representation of the bear and ragged staff, with the initials R. L., standing for Robert Leicester. The building was in former times one of the lodges of the castle, to which the roadway passing the house leads, thus forming the principal approach. In this house, tradition asserts, Amy Robsart used to stay, and there is at least a tradition that years ago a secret underground passage was discovered leading from the house to the castle.

Although prettily situated, Kenilworth does not nowadays possess any great attractions other than its castle. But on the slope to the east of the latter, and slightly below the level of the Coventry Road, is the church, consisting of a western tower and spire, nave with aisles, transepts, and a chancel with a south aisle or Lady Chapel of considerable interest. The nave and tower date from the fourteenth century, and on the western side of the latter a very beautiful Norman doorway, probably removed from the adjacent priory, has been inserted. This door, which is well worth the study of those interested in architecture, possesses three receding arches, the first fluted, the second beak-headed, and the third embattled, encircled by a nail-headed band, and the whole enclosed in an ornamental square, having a border of diaper-work

and cable moulding. There is also a patera in each spandril.

The old entrance to the rood loft may be seen on the north side of the chancel arch, now blocked up. On the south side is a very good example of a lychnoscope. The chancel contains a piscina and a circular font, dating from the middle of the seventeenth century. In the lower belfry is a boat-shaped leaden casting, weighing about a ton, and bearing the seal of one of Henry VIII.'s Commissioners, probably impressed upon it at the time of his visit, with reference to the Dissolution of the priory hard by, amongst the ruins of which the casting was found in 1888.

There would appear to be little doubt that this "pig" forms part of the leaden roof of the priory, for in different accounts relating to the suppression of the religious foundations throughout the country there are many records of the melting down of the lead covering the roofs, in order that it might be turned into cash. The ancient Communion plate belonging to the church is of great interest, and includes a chalice, dating from about 1570, the gift of the Earl of Leicester ; a flagon, paten, and chalice given by the Duchess of Dudley in 1638 ; and another less ornamental chalice given in 1644 by the Countess of Monmouth. The church was somewhat relentlessly and badly restored in 1865.

The priory was a foundation of the Augustinians or Black Canons, the full title of whom was the Canons Regular of St. Augustine. The house was founded about the year 1122 by Geoffrey de Clinton.

As we have before said, the chief attraction of Kenilworth nowadays is its ruined castle, a magnificent and impressive red sandstone pile, now overgrown with ivy and, alas, crumbling yearly into greater decay, which in ancient times saw so much of the stir, pageantry, and circumstance of life. And even if some of the legends and tales connected with this truly wonderful building have little foundation in actual fact, there is still much of unimpeachable history and romance welded into its very fabric.

The glamour of Kenilworth is undeniable, and doubtless has been not a little added to from the fact that so great and vivid a descriptive writer as Sir Walter Scott made it the *locale* of one of his most popular and perhaps most readable novels. That his history is not entirely accurate has little or nothing to do with the enjoyment of the book by the general reader, nor does it militate against the interest aroused in the fine ruins of the castle which he made the scene of so much pageantry and romance.

The name of Kenilworth is probably derived from the Saxon owner Kenulph or Kenelm, and "worthe," signifying a dwelling-place ; but in the Domesday Book it is called Chenewrd, and in some Charters Chenille Wurda, the "worthe" or manor of Chenil. Whether the original owner of the manor was one named Chenil, or Kenelm the Mercian, there is no satisfactory evidence, but Dugdale associates the name with the latter, and this, indeed, seems the more probable derivation. One thing appears certain, however, namely, that the original

BADDESLEY CLINTON HALL.

founder of Kenilworth was a man of considerable position, because his buhr or keep and its earthworks were both extensive and strong.

At the period of the Domesday Book the manor of Kenilworth was a portion of the royal manor of Stoneleigh, and was divided into two parts, known as "Opton or Upton, containing three hides, held direct of the King by Albertus Clericus, in pure alms; and Chineworde, held by Ricardus Forestarius. Opton is upper-town or high-town, the rising ground to the north of the present church. Chineworth is Kenilworth proper." It seems probable that Chineworth is a corruption of the name Kenilworth.

The ancient history of the castle is, owing to the great alterations made by succeeding owners and the absence of records, very difficult to trace, though it is quite certain that the owner of the manor during Saxon times, as was usual, fortified the best position by earthworks, and also probably erected an earthen keep. The exact site of the latter is quite an open question, as is the point as to which of the earthworks now traceable date back to the far remote period of Saxon times. Indeed, until the reign of Henry I. the history of the castle is largely speculative. Some authorities incline to the view that the site of the present buildings was in Roman times that of a fort, temporary or otherwise; which the Saxon chief afterwards selected, adopted, and enlarged, that it might afford shelter and security for his own flocks and herds which roamed the Arden, and even those also of his immediate dependants.

Kenilworth and its several owners during the Middle Ages saw many vicissitudes and several tragic events. In the Barons' War it changed hands several times, and among its most famous owners was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who led the Barons against King Henry III.

Many royal visits were paid during the succeeding reigns, and Edward II. was deposed in the Great Hall, and afterwards kept a prisoner in the castle.

In 1563 Kenilworth was granted by Queen Elizabeth to her favourite, Robert Dudley, who in the following year was created Earl of Leicester. Soon after coming into possession of this magnificent fortress dwelling he set about to make radical alterations. We are told that he "gutted the keep and forebuilding, afterwards fitting them up in the Tudor style, and also erected the pile of buildings which are known by his name, and rebuilt the Gallery Tower on the outer end of the dam, and probably added an upper story to the great barn." One of his finest additions was undoubtedly the great gate-house on the north side, by which means he turned what had formerly been the rear of the castle into the front, approaching it from the road crossing the valley instead of from the side of the fields and lake. It is considered by several authorities, too, that it was probably he who later on filled up the ditch of the inner ward. The building material he used was ashlar, and although the work was not badly done, it was probably carried out too rapidly, and was, therefore, not of a very substantial or lasting character. After-

wards, when the castle was allowed to fall into disrepair, and the roofs and floors disappeared, the walls soon gave way and became unsafe.

Doubtless with a view of entertaining his royal mistress, who visited the castle in 1566, 1568, 1572, and 1575, Robert Dudley spent an immense sum on his alterations, which has been variously estimated from fifty to seventy-five thousand pounds: a sum which in those days, of course, represented a far greater amount than would appear at first sight. Although no doubt Queen Elizabeth was entertained right royally on the occasions of all her visits, it was the last one, which began on Saturday 9th of July, and did not end until the 26th, that is most historically famous by reason of the extraordinarily lavish and interesting character of its entertainments prepared for the Queen.

From contemporary accounts—all the revels were chronicled in detail by Laneham, an attendant on the Queen—we gather at least some idea of what these famous festivities were like. The Queen was met, whilst still distant from the castle several hundred yards, by a person dressed to represent "one of the ten sibills cumly clad in a pall of white sylk, who pronounced a proper poezie in English rime and meeter." This service "Her Majestie benignly accepted, and passed foorth into the next gate of the Brayz, which, for the length, largenes, and use, they now call the Tylt-yard."

Immediately on entering the latter the porter, a huge fellow, who is recorded to have been so over-

come with a sense of the Queen's majesty that he scarcely knew what to do, presented the keys to the Queen. This ceremony finished, six trumpeters, dressed in loose, silken garments, who stood upon the wall over the gateway, blew a fanfare of welcome, whilst "her Highness, all along this Tilt-yard, rode into the inner gate, where a person representing the Lady of the Lake (famous in King Arthur's Book), with two Nymphes waiting upon her, arrayed all in sylks, attended her Highness coming." These beings appeared suddenly on a floating island in the lake blazing with torches, and made a speech of welcome to the Queen, which ended with music; the speech which was made by the Lady of the Lake narrated the "auncientee of the castle," and the dignities and titles of the Earls of Leicester, and concluded with the following verse :—

> Wherefore, I will attend while you lodge here,
> (Most peerless Queene) to Court to make resort;
> And as my love to Arthure did appeere,
> So shal't to you in earnest and in sport.

A special road had been made by which the Queen entered the castle, a bridge 20 feet wide and 70 feet long having been constructed across the dry valley leading to the castle gates, for her to pass over. The posts erected on either side bore trays and bowls containing gifts from the gods, which a poet had been engaged especially to present to her. These consisted of rare fruits from Pomona, corn from Ceres, wine

from Bacchus, a cage of wild fowl from Silvanus, sea fish from Neptune, weapons from Mars, and musical instruments from Phœbus. Her Majesty then passed into the inner court, and (again quoting the ancient account) "thear set doun from her palfrey was conveied up to a chamber, when after did follo a great peal of Gunz and lightning by Fyr-work."

One can well imagine that the Queen must have been fatigued by her reception, which seems to have included several recitals in addition to the Latin poem, which was read to her by a poet clad "in a long ceruleous Garment with a Bay Garland on his head and a skrol in his hand."

The festivities thus inaugurated lasted for seventeen days, and included nearly every conceivable amusement popular in those days. There were hunting parties, dances, and theatrical representations, fireworks on the lake, bear baitings, Italian tumblers, tilting at the Quintain, a country Bride-ale or marriage feast, and Morrice dancing, the performers for the latter entertainment being probably drawn from Long Marston, near Stratford-on-Avon, which in those days was famous for them. Most elaborate aquatic sports were also given on the lake, where a Triton appeared riding on a mermaid 18 feet long, accompanied by Arion on a dolphin, from the interior of each of which proceeded hidden music of a delightful character. In addition to all these things the Coventry players made a special journey to give their ancient play called "Hocks Tuesday," which depicted scenes from the incidents

of the massacre of the Danes in the reign of King Ethelred.

With these latter performances it is recorded the Queen expressed herself as greatly pleased, giving to the players a couple of fat bucks and five marks in money for a feast.

Leicester not only entertained the Queen, but crowds of other folk seem to have enjoyed the open house provided, and we are told by Laneham that "The Clok Bell sang not a Note, all the while her Highness waz thear : the Clok also stood still withall ; the handz of both the tablz stood firm and fast, allweys pointing at 2 a'Clok," this being the usual banqueting hour.

Some idea of the cost of the festivities, which is stated by some authorities to have amounted to at least a thousand a day, may be gained from the fact that no less than 320 hogsheads of beer were drunk. The Queen marked her approval of the entertainment provided by knighting five gentlemen, amongst whom were Sir Thomas Cecil, son and heir to the Lord High Treasurer Sir Henry Cobham, and Sir Francis Stanhope ; and it would appear that she also touched for the King's Evil, as a record exists that "Nyne persons were cured of the peynful and daungerous deseaz called the King's Evil." All of the masques were written specially for the occasion ; a good number of them by George Gascoigne, and may be found in his well-known account of the festivities, entitled "Princely Pleasures at Kenilworth."

Amy Robsart

As is well known, Sir Walter Scott in his novel describes Amy Robsart as being present at Kenilworth in 1575. This idea, however, is entirely erroneous, as indeed are many other incidents recorded in the tale. She died at Cumnor Place fifteen years before this royal pageant, and it seems probable that her death occurred prior to the granting of the castle to Leicester; although she may possibly have passed through Kenilworth on a journey, as there is an old tradition to this effect at Moreton Morrell.

Very briefly, the real facts concerning Amy Robsart are as follows. The only legitimate child of Sir John Robsart of Siderstern, she was born in 1532, and was married at the age of eighteen on 4th June, at the Royal Palace of Sheen, to Lord Dudley, in the presence of Edward VI. and many members of the Court. She lived chiefly in the country during the time that her husband was in attendance on the Court, and ten years after her marriage, in 1560, was residing at Cumnor Place, rented from William Owen, a son of George Owen, who had been one of the physicians to King Henry VIII. At this time there were staying with her a Mrs. Odingsells, sister of Mr. Hyde, and Mrs. Owen, wife of the owner of the house.

It was on Sunday, 8th September, that she was found dead at the foot of a staircase, with her neck broken, by the servants, who had been allowed to visit the fair at Abingdon. In due course an inquest was held, and full inquiry made into the circumstances of

her death, but nothing was discovered in the least implicating any one as accessory to it.

Although Robert Dudley was undoubtedly secretly married at the time of his Sovereign's visit to Kenilworth, it was not to Amy Robsart. Four years previous to the Queen's visit he had engaged himself to Lady Douglas Sheffield, whom he had privately married in May two years later, a son, Robert, being shortly afterwards born to them. This marriage (concerning the legality of which there seems to be some doubt) he ultimately endeavoured to repudiate, and at the time of the festivities at Kenilworth he was actually carrying on a clandestine intrigue with Lettice, Countess of Essex, whose husband died in the following year.

In 1578, although Lady Douglas Sheffield was alive, he married Lady Lettice, who was a daughter of Sir Francis Knollys, and a son was born to them, who, however, died in 1584. On Leicester's death it was found that he had bequeathed the castle for life to his brother Ambrose, Earl of Warwick, and after him to his son by Lady Douglas Sheffield, whom he termed Sir Robert Dudley.

The only portion now habitable of what was anciently one of the finest baronial fortress homes in the kingdom is Leicester's magnificent gate-house, which many authorities are agreed equals in its size and beauty of architecture many a manor-house itself. The old-time entrance passage of this gate-house nowadays forms two rooms and small additions. The magnificent fireplace in one of the rooms of the

MAXSTOKE CASTLE.

house is said to be a relic brought from the castle, probably at the time of its dismantlement by the Parliamentarians.

The entrance to the castle is through a small gateway, a few yards distant from the gate-house; and after passing through a strip of garden the outer court of the castle is reached, and an impressive and fairly extensive view of the whole building is obtained.

On the right-hand side are the remains of the buildings which in former times formed the northern side of the inner court, with the once extensive stables, just visible on the left through a small shrubbery, with the circular Lunn's Tower some forty feet in height close to them, and projecting from the curtain. The tower has two upper floors with fireplaces, and to one of these has been given (why it is not discoverable) the title of the King's Chamber. The loopholes are all splayed on the inside, to assist in the discharge of arrows, and on the outside wall are holes, in which were placed beams to support the wooden galleries, called "hoards," which enabled the defenders to have a command of the walls, and thus make it impossible for the attacking force to obtain shelter by keeping close to them. The entrance to the tower was blown up during the Civil War in the reign of Charles I.

The stabling, which is on the ground floor, of stone, and the upper part mostly of timber and brick, has in the centre a large porch and a wide entrance, as though this part of the building was once used for the purpose of a barn. The work is chiefly in the Late Perpen-

dicular style, although traditionally of a much earlier date.

Mortimer's Tower lies at the other end of the stable buildings, past the warder's chamber, and is at the castle end of the tilt-yard or dam. Why called Mortimer's Tower has never been satisfactorily settled, as although Scott and some other writers believe that it took its name from the Earl of March, who played the principal part in the great tournament in the reign of Edward I., and may possibly have lodged in it, others incline to the view that it derived it from the circumstance of a Sir John Mortimer having been imprisoned in it during the reign of Henry V. As a fact, the tower is more properly to be considered a strong double gateway, leading into the tilt-yard, and formerly provided with two portcullises and a double set of gates. Remains of chambers on either side are discoverable, the one on the left hand possessing a garderobe ; the outer entrance is defended by two half-round towers, which are pierced with loopholes for repelling attack. The tower gateway leads out upon the high bank, which was originally a portion of the dam of the great lake, and was used as a tilt-yard. It extends for a distance of about eighty yards to the Gallery Tower placed at the end of this isthmus-like strip of land, which in ancient times separated the lower lake from the great lake. The Gallery Tower, however, cannot now be reached from the tilt-yard, owing to the fact that a deep cutting was made through the dam for the purpose of draining off the waters from the lake, but it

can be seen embowered in trees from the castle side of the cutting. This name was probably derived from the fact that in ancient times it was furnished with "a broad and fair gallery, set aside for the use of the ladies, who were thus able to witness in comfort the jousts and feats of chivalry which took place in the tilting-yard," and also a "spacious and noble room" for the same purpose. It was through this gate that Queen Elizabeth made her entry into the castle, and from it to the other gate the special bridge had been constructed across the lake.

The "Brayz," which are huge mounds of earth, once forming formidable outworks to the castle, now overgrown by trees and underwood, probably derived the name from the Norman-French *braie*, meaning a low rampart; although another authority seems to think that the word was derived from "brayda," a suburban field or broad place.

Near the Water Tower, which is situated almost midway between Lunn's Tower and Mortimer's Tower, can be traced the foundations of the castle chapel, built by John of Gaunt. The tower is an interesting example of architecture, in the ground-floor room of which, possibly originally a kitchen, is a fine fireplace. The upper chamber, from which a good view of Lunn's Tower is obtained across the long, picturesque, and weather-stained roof of the stables, is known as the Queen's Chamber; why, there is no record to tell, and it is, therefore, probable that the name is a fanciful one. The Warder's Room, which contains a fireplace,

and a large stone aumbry or recess, with a broken shelf, and also a garderobe, is principally constructed in the thickness of the wall, but projects to a slight extent on its outer face. It is situated almost exactly midway between the Water Tower and Mortimer's.

The great lake, mention of which has already been made, was upwards of a hundred acres in extent, about a hundred yards in width, ten or twelve feet in depth, and extended round the castle on its southern and western sides for a distance of nearly half a mile. The second or smaller lake, which existed in medieval times on the southern and eastern sides of the castle, was drained by Leicester and converted by him into an orchard.

Entering the castle buildings themselves from the outer ward into the inner court, the huge impressive pile of Cæsar's Tower rises above one on the right, with the ruins of Leicester's buildings opposite, on the left. Once the inner court is entered, one has on the left the Privy Chamber, Presence Chamber, and the ruins of the suite of rooms used by Queen Elizabeth.

Immediately opposite the entrance to the inner court are the ruined walls of the great hall, under which is the postern leading out on to the ramparts by which, in Walter Scott's *Kenilworth*, Wayland Smith was ejected by Michael Lambourne. The outer path to this postern cuts through the great bank on which the hall is placed, and which was the inner boundary of the moat of the older castle, the moat of which was what is now a hollow space between it and the garden wall.

It seems probable that this great mound of earth was the buhr of the original Saxon owner. Other authorities, however, suppose that the mound was the site occupied by the keep.

The postern is a square-headed doorway, and formerly had a portcullis, but this must have been rather more for show than as able to afford any special security, as the huge windows of the hall above would have made the defence of this particular side of the castle a matter of considerable difficulty.

Cæsar's Tower, and the block of buildings contiguous to it, are well seen from the point where the postern gate and passage running under the Banqueting Hall open upon the inner court.

From the summit of the Strong Tower one has a fine view of the surrounding country, and also of the gardens, pleasance, and the remains of the Swan Tower, now almost hidden in ivy and trees, the bottom stage of which used probably to be anciently used for the purposes of housing or feeding the swans in the moat.

Immediately next to the Strong Tower is the Great Hall, a magnificent though sadly ruined example of domestic architecture of the period, measuring 90 feet by 45 feet. It was originally approached by a broad straight staircase on its north-eastern side, which led to the portal or porch resting upon a vault. In this porch, which is vaulted and groined and beautifully panelled, with the hollows of the mouldings of the doorway filled with exquisite foliated work, there is a small

recess for the warder or usher. The floor of the hall rested upon the vaulted roof of a magnificent cellar ; the vaulting springing from ten piers arranged in double rows at equal distances from the walls, and having corresponding half-pillars against the walls themselves and in the angles. The lighting of the hall above was from large windows set in deep splayed recesses, with wide stone window seats, three on the eastern and four on the western side, each of two lights, divided by two transoms and richly carved. There are the remains of two large fireplaces, one on either side of the hall, situated at about one-third of its length, measuring from the south end ; and on the side next to the inner court is a magnificent oriel, constructed of five sides of an octagon, and formerly communicating with the dais by an arch, and containing three large windows of two lights, and a small one.

The roof of this fine hall was of open timbered work, supported by five hammer beams on each side, the holes for which are still visible between the windows, the whole building forming a beautiful and very pure specimen of Early Perpendicular work.

Such is a brief description of all that remains of this once splendid medieval fortress, which was at the same time a dwelling notable for its luxurious fittings and the splendid entertainments that so frequently took place within its walls. Situated almost ideally, it possesses a wide prospect of fertile lands and wooded vales, over which in ancient times the Lord of Kenilworth held sway. It is, indeed, lamentable that this

fine castle should have aroused the destructive propensities of the Cromwellians, and should not have been preserved, as have happily so many other medieval buildings in the fair county of Warwick, much as it was when knights and ladies trod its halls in stately measure or revelry, and strolled on its terraces and through its pleasances.

CHAPTER VII

LEAMINGTON

LEAMINGTON is charmingly situated in the heart of the county, towards the eastern boundary of the wide amphitheatre of gradually rising hills of which its sister town of Warwick, distant but two miles from it, is the centre. The oldest portion of the town is built on the low-lying ground to the south side of the River Leam, and was in former years known as the old town. Modern Leamington, on the other hand, which is so picturesque, and consists of fine villas, well-planned streets and avenues, lies on the northern side of the river, and has its origin from the time onwards when the baths were first discovered and turned to good account by local enterprise.

One of the most conspicuous charms of Leamington is its profusion of foliage; and close to some of its main streets, and, indeed, bordering them, are beautiful trees, all of which, from their variety, are seldom leafless at one and the same time. The modern town at the time of its inception was far more wisely laid out than was usual in former days, for it is a place of

COMPTON WYNYATES.

straight and wide avenues and streets, planned with almost American precision.

To those who have never visited Leamington such a description may not evoke any visions of beauty, but the regularity which marks the laying out of the town has been wisely tempered by the preservation and planting, wherever possible, of rows of elms, lindens, and plane trees, which not only break up the monotony of streets, but impart to the town an almost garden-like aspect. Notwithstanding, however, the fact that in the byroads, streets, and avenues of the residential quarters, more especially of Milverton and Lillington, grass plats separate the footpaths from the road, adding materially to the beauty and distinction of the place, the business quarter is no less business-like than that of other towns. Nathaniel Hawthorne, the American novelist, has written enthusiastically of Leamington; and those who have resided in this beautiful spot all the year round can testify that his statement, that it is a place of charm which is "always in flower," is not far from the truth.

The rise of Leamington has been of considerable rapidity, as until the end of the eighteenth century it was merely an obscure village, and in the year 1801 the population was only just over three hundred souls, and the number of houses but sixty-seven.

Its full title in former years was Leamington Priors, derived from the fact that the town is built on the banks of the River Leam, and once belonged to the priors of Kenilworth. In modern days it has become

known as Leamington Spa, the late Queen Victoria, in memory of a visit she paid to the place in 1838, giving it the title of the Royal Leamington Spa.

The town is very unlike in appearance its ancient and more celebrated neighbour Warwick. In fact, whilst the latter has its chief attraction in antiquity, Leamington has its chief interest as a modern and fashionable health resort. It is wrong, however, to suppose that Leamington has no history, and is as entirely modern as its appearance would lead one at first sight to presume.

The name of the river upon which it stands is of ancient Celtic origin, and means the elm-tree or elm-bordered stream, and doubtless in ancient times it was well-wooded for the greater part of its course on both banks. There are many Celtic river names to be met with in Warwickshire, and generally these survivals have indicated an ancient settlement, or at least camp of the invaders, although as regards Leamington no traces of one now remain if it ever existed.

The town was in ancient times a portion of the very wide possessions of Turchill, the last and most powerful of all the Saxon earls of Warwick. In the Domesday Book the estate is put down as containing two hides, or about two hundred acres of land, the value of which was £4. There is also a mention of two mills situated on the stream within its boundaries. Turchill's son was robbed of this part of his patrimony, and it was granted by William the Conqueror to a

Norman baron, Roger de Montgomery, who was afterwards created Earl of Shrewsbury.

In those early days the town, or rather perhaps should we say the hamlet, known as Leamington underwent great vicissitudes of ownership, for although Roger de Montgomery's son Hugh inherited the estates, his brother Robert, to whom they descended during the reign of William Rufus, called De Beleseme from the name of a castle which belonged to him, was declared a traitor, and all his possessions, including Leamington, were seized, and the latter was given to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. After a few years the possession of it passed to Geoffrey de Clinton, and was by him granted to Gilbert Nutricius of Warwick and his heirs, who held it by the service of half a knight's fee. For some reason, however, it speedily reverted to the De Clintons, and Geoffrey de Clinton, son of the original owner, gave it to the canon and priors of Kenilworth about the year 1166, in whose possession it remained until the Dissolution of the Monasteries. It remained the property of the Crown till 1563, when Elizabeth granted it to Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick. He dying without an heir male, his title became extinct, and from this period Leamington had many owners, ultimately coming into the possession of the Earls of Aylesford.

Although Leamington in ancient times had its vicissitudes, there is little of interest historically concerning it until about the year 1784, when Abbotts made the discovery of a second mineral spring, which

caused attention to be focussed on the medicinal properties of the Leamington waters. It is doubtless to the discovery of these springs, and others, may be traced the fact that the town in the first years of the nineteenth century began to be a place of importance and fashion. Long before then Camden, Speed, and Dugdale had mentioned prominently the Leamington Waters; and Fuller in 1662, referring to the same subject, quaintly observes, "At Leamington, two miles from Warwick, there issue out, within a stride, [out] of the womb of the earth, two twin springs, as different in taste and operation as Jacob and Esau in disposition; the one salt and the other fresh. This the meanest countryman does plainly see by their effects; while it would puzzle a consultation of physicians to assign the cause thereof."

Notwithstanding Fuller's opinion, medical writers soon began to publish speculations concerning mineral waters, and upon these very springs in particular. The earliest pamphleteer upon record was Dr. Guidot in 1689, and he was succeeded by many others, including Doctors Allen, Short, Johnson, Kerr, Kirwan, Middleton, and Loudon. It was Dr. Allen who first settled in the place, and Mr. William Abbotts, who, in 1786, sunk the second well and erected and opened the first baths in June of the same year. This well was almost in the centre of the old village. The third spring or the Road Well, is situated on the high road from Warwick to Daventry and London, and was discovered in 1790.

The Village Poet

Leamington was much patronised by those who either were afflicted by real or fancied ailments, which the waters might be hoped to cure, and the efforts of Dr. Abbotts did much to popularise the place. In his endeavour to spread abroad the fame of the place, he was ably seconded by his friend Benjamin Satchwell, the village poet and shoemaker, who had had the good fortune, in 1784, to discover the well on a piece of land in Bath Street.

Referring to the increased importance, size, and prosperity of the town, Satchwell wrote :—

> If Muster Abbotts had not done,
> His baths of laud and praise ;
> It must have been poor Leamington,
> Now, as in former days.

These two men, no doubt, had much to do with the initial stages of the town's prosperity, and on the tomb of Satchwell may be traced, but with difficulty, as the inscription is greatly obliterated :—

> Hail the unassuming tomb,
> Of him who told where health and beauty bloomed ;
> Of him whose lengthened life improving ran—
> A blameless, useful, venerable man.

The advocacy of these and other Leamingtonians caused the town to advance rapidly into public favour, and the discovery of other wells up till the year 1819 served to provide ample accommodation for bathers and others, making the place one of the most famous health-resorts in England.

In these days, indeed, Leamington might well have been called "The Bath of the Midlands," for to the town were attracted much the same classes of invalids and fashionable folk as were drawn to its more famous Somersetshire prototype; and, indeed, Leamington must have been then even a gayer and more fashionable town than it is at the present time.

From the Leamington of the last few years of the eighteenth century to the flourishing town of to-day is, indeed, a far cry. Then, according to one authority, it was little more than a small sequestered village, to which the mail-coaches came no nearer than Warwick, and any letters or parcels for the inhabitants could only be obtained by some enterprising villager going over to the latter place for them.

And even in the first decade of the nineteenth century Macready, the great actor, writes thus of the place in his diary. Referring to Birmingham he says: "The summer months were passed there, diversified by a short stay at Leamington, then a small village consisting only of a few thatched houses—not one of them tiled or slated; the Bowling Green being the only one where very moderate accommodation could be secured. There was in process of erection a hotel of more pretention, which I fancy was to be the 'Dog' or 'Greyhound,' but which had some months of work to fit it for the reception of guests."

It was in the year 1819 that the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV., visited Leamington from Warwick, where he was staying with the Earl of Warwick;

and three years later the Princess Augusta came to the town to take a course of the waters, and from that time the place may be considered to have been firmly established in public favour. Quoting from a contemporary writer, "where but a few years earlier cattle grazed undisturbedly, yellow corn waved, and the plough-boy whistled over the Leam, we now behold with surprise and pleasure extensive mansions arising as if by magic, and tastefully decorated shops presenting every Metropolitan article of fashion and convenience."

Some other famous visitors who came to Leamington in the early years of the last century were the Princess Victoria, in company with her mother the Duchess of Kent; and later John Ruskin, who testified to the benefit derived from a six weeks' course of the Chalybeate Spring as follows: "My health is in my own hands, I have gone back to brown potatoes and cherry pie!"

But Leamington of to-day owes a good deal less of its popularity to its springs than it does to its beautiful situation, and the fact of it being such an excellent centre for interesting excursions; whilst hunting people regard the place as an almost unequalled sporting district, from the circumstance that a fashionable life can be enjoyed there in conjunction with hunting six days a week, and the choice of as many packs. Warwickshire, indeed, has been called the third best hunting county in England, and Leamington must take even a higher place as a centre for hunting folk.

One of the prettiest features of this town, distinguished nowadays for its handsome shops and villas, are the Jephson Gardens, covering an area of some twenty acres, and situated almost in the centre of the town, the picturesqueness of which is greatly added to by the presence of the River Leam skirting them along the southern boundary. This site was rented to trustees for a period of two thousand years at a pepper-corn rent (if demanded) by the late Mr. Edward Willes, of Newbold Comyn, with the stipulation that the ground should never be built upon. The property, which was then a strip of meadow land, was taken over by the trustees in May 1846, and was immediately laid out by them in much its present form.

On the opposite side of the river are the Mill Gardens ; and on the same side of the river and along its western circuit has been laid out a pretty Victoria Park, with its picturesque New River Walk.

Still farther sylvan promenades are afforded by the Pump Room Gardens. The grounds are several acres in extent, and are beautifully laid out with ornamental flower-beds and winding paths ; whilst on the side next to the parade is the famous Linden Avenue, three-quarters of a century old, and forming one of the finest shady promenades in Leamington, or indeed in any town of the Midlands.

Of ancient public buildings Leamington has practically none, if one excepts the reconstructed and much altered Pump Room, once the scene of so much of the fashionable life of the town.

BURTON DASSETT CHURCH.

Literary Associations

None of the other public buildings, with the exception of the Town Hall, call for particular notice.

There are not a few literary associations with Leamington, and the Holly Walk, which is a continuation of Regent Grove, a fine tree-lined avenue, will always possess an interest for lovers of Dickens from the fact that here the novelist laid the scene of the first meeting between Edith Granger and Mr. Carker in *Dombey and Son*. Scarcely a more picturesque spot than this walk, with its row of fine trees running down the centre, its grass plats, shady seats, and flower beds, could be found for a meeting of the kind.

The old Bedford Hotel, which was the scene of one of the famous Jack Mytton's most remarkable exploits, when for a wager he rode his mare upstairs into the dining-room, set her at the large table, which she cleared, jumping over the heads of his assembled friends, and then continued her course out of the balcony into the street below, has long disappeared; doubtless to the regret of all hunting folk and of the curious sightseer.

Like Hawthorne, those who have visited Leamington carry away with them pleasant memories of a town which, although owing much to natural beauty of situation, yet owes also not a little to the intelligence and foresight of those responsible for its development, who may be said to have coaxed rather than coerced Nature in their efforts to make the spot one of uncommon rural and urban attractiveness, whilst still mindful of the demands of exigent moderns.

CHAPTER VIII

THE STORY OF BIRMINGHAM

The city of Birmingham has been sung by a local poet as follows :—

> Illustrious off-spring of Vulcanic toil !
> Pride of the country ! Glory of the Isle !
> Europe's grand toy shop ! arts' exhaustive mine
> These, and more titles, Birmingham, are thine.
> From jealous fears, from chartered fetters free,
> Desponding genius finds a friend in thee ;
> Thy soul as liberal as the breath of Spring,
> Cheers his faint heart and plumes his flagging wing.

But, nevertheless, it presents more of a prosaic and commercial than a romantic attraction for a writer.

The derivation of the name has not yet been satisfactorily arrived at, and by even its most accurate and painstaking historian is considered "too remote for explanation." Aided by the erratic spelling of former times, during the last four centuries alone there have been eight modes of spelling it,—Burmyngham, Bermyngham, Byrmyngham, Bermyngeham, Brumychcham, Bromycham, Bromicham, and lastly the more

modern and generally accepted Birmingham. The curious, however, may be set yet a greater puzzle of selective ingenuity, as from different authors, documents, records, and papers it is possible to find upwards of a hundred additional methods of spelling the name of the town which is popularly known as "the capital of the Midlands."

Of the eight ways we have enumerated in detail two alone have been in a measure satisfactorily accounted for; one deriving its origin from a family, and the other from the situation of the town. Early inhabitants and even mere settlers of a place in almost every country of the world were in the habit of describing in their place-names, the mountain, lake and valley, the moorland and the heath, and also the character, situation, and size of these; and villages, towns, and cities which grew up afterwards in these situations were frequently given names which in a measure described or perpetuated some place or object in their immediate vicinity, or the actual spot where they were founded.

Dugdale, the historian, is inclined to believe that Birmingham, or Bromwycham, was a name given by a Saxon owner or settler. In this regard he says, "The appellation need not be doubted; the last part of it, viz. "ham," denoting a home or dwelling, and the former manifesting itself to be a proper name."

Hutton, on the other hand, is inclined to make it of an even more ancient date, and argues that "Brom," derived possibly from the broom, a shrub growing

freely in the soil of the district, and "wych," signifying a dwelling, constituted its original name Bromwych. He finds, moreover, some confirmation of his opinion from the names of two other towns in the immediate neighbourhood, West Bromwych and Castle Bromwych; the terminal "ham," he argues, being subsequently added, and up till the time of the Saxon Heptarchy the spot retained its full name, "Bromwycham." This argument, however, in reality seems to support Dugdale's idea concerning the derivation of the name, as all three portions of it are of Saxon origin. The alteration locally to Bromicham was only a contraction, which continued in use down till the eighteenth century, and indeed is to be traced in the pronunciation of the word as "Brumijum" by some locals even at the present day. It would appear, however, that it is more than possible, whatever its ancient name may have been, and whatever its derivation, that the present-day name "Birmingham" was given to the place from the owner of the estate rather than the owner taking his name from it.

This latter view has been borne out by modern research, and it has been now generally admitted that a family or tribe called "Beorm" or "Berm" gave the place its early Saxon name. More than six centuries ago, indeed, and for a period lasting four centuries, we find the name of De Bermingham as lords of the fee. The first was a Peter de Bermingham, who in the reign of Henry II. in 1154 had a castle here, and lived in considerable splendour. Here all

succeeding members of the family dwelt until the Duke of Northumberland ousted them in 1537, and with their ejectment the castle soon fell into ruins and disappeared, although as late as 1816 a moat and some traces of the walls remained.

In the days of Edward the Confessor the town probably formed part of the possessions of Ulwin, generally identified with the Alwyne whose son Turchill founded the Warwickshire family of Arden, of whom the mother of Shakespeare was a descendant. There is no doubt that the place was of considerable importance in Saxon times, as proof exists of the holding of a market there prior to the Conquest.

Although there is no mention in the Domesday Book of any church at that date, during the rebuilding of St. Martin's in 1562, some early stonework, evidently belonging to a former building and pointing to the existence of a church dating from before the Conquest, was discovered. Fairs were certainly held very early in Birmingham's existence as a town, and in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, is a curious MS. map dating from the last years of the thirteenth century, with a church clearly indicated, in addition to a considerable number of houses. On this map, where the name is given as "Brymingha," many neighbouring towns of traditionally greater importance at that period are not even marked, and neither Coventry nor Warwick are named.

It would thus appear that in medieval times, although Birmingham must have been a small town

it was also a flourishing one, with a market for country produce, cattle, hides, etc., which was visited not only by local traders but by those of adjoining and even distant counties.

In 1382 the Guild of the Holy Cross was founded to maintain two priests at St. Martin's Church, and was ten years later made a Fraternity of men and women under the name of "the Bailiffe and Communalite of Birmingham and other adjacent places for a Chantrie of Priestes, and services in the Church for the souls of the Founders and all the Fraternitie." It also had other and more secular objects. In the year 1545 the lands belonging to it were seized by the Crown, and five years afterwards were given by Edward VI. for the "Free Grammar School of King Edward the Sixth, for the Education and Instruction of Children in Grammar for ever." The property so arbitrarily acquired was thus in the end devoted to a useful purpose. At that time it was valued at £31 : 2 : 10, and this formed the endowment fund of the famous school, the income of which at the close of 1880 amounted to the large sum of nearly £22,000, and is now computed to be almost £50,000.

The manor-house and seat of the De Berminghams, not a trace of which now remains, was situated within a few yards of St. Martin's Church, and a little to the west of Digbeth, the site now being occupied by the prosaic cattle-market of large extent.

Leland speaks of the town at the time of his visit, which took place in 1538, thus: "The beauty of

Birmingham, a good markett towne in the extreame parts of Warwickshire, is one streete going up alonge almost from the left rype (bank) of the brook, up a meane hill, by the length of a quarter of a mile. I saw but one Paroche Church in the towne."

Camden, who visited Birmingham some half century later, writes of it as "full of inhabitants, and resounding with hammers and anvils, for the most of them are smiths." "The lower part" (of the town), he adds, "standeth very waterish; the upper riseth with faire buildings."

Some authorities seem to infer that Birmingham was not noted for its metal works until a comparatively recent period, but Leland states: "There be many smithes in the town that used to make knives and all mannour of cutting tooles, and many loriners that make bittes and a great many naylors. Soe that a great part of the town is maintained by smithes whoe have their iron and seacole out of Staffordshire."

Hutton, Birmingham's most famous and completest historian of the past, claims for this city, whose rise has been so phenomenal during the last half century, that history proves its progress has been continuous, and that the town has never suffered a decline. But, of course, during the centuries before Charles II. it was slow, and only notable in comparison with that of other places.

Although the town in Leland's day is spoken of as having its chief beauty in "one streete going up alonge from the left of the brook, up a meane hill, by the

length of a quarter of a mile," and could have then been but a comparatively small village, Hutton argues that even in the days of the ancient Britons the smiths of Birmingham supplied implements of war and husbandry. It may even be possible, according to this historian, that the scythes fixed to Boadicea's chariot wheels had their genesis at a Birmingham forge. In support of this theory he quotes that "upon the borders of Aston parish stands Aston furnace, appropriated for melting iron-stone, and reducing it into 'pigs'; this has the appearance of great antiquity. From the melting ore in this subterraneous region of infernal aspect is produced a calx, or cinder, of which there is an enormous mountain. From an attentive survey the observer would suppose so prodigious a heap could not accumulate in a hundred generations; however, it shows no perceptible addition in the age of man."

Before Birmingham became famous for its manufactures it was known for the great number of tanners resident there; and the hides which furnished a supply for the rest of the county were laid out in the High Street in piles on fine days; and in wet weather were deposited in the Leather Hall. This Leather Market was identified with Birmingham in the tenth or eleventh century, and continued until the beginning of the eighteenth century; and it was in this 'High' or main street that early settlers manufactured coarse ironware, nails, and similar articles. Hutton is inclined to believe that in quite ancient times carpenters' tools as

LITTLE WOLFORD MANOR-HOUSE.

well as spades, forks, and other implements of husbandry were made here; and that the worn hollow ways in the roads that proceeded from Birmingham form additional evidence of the town's antiquity and commercial importance. He goes on to observe concerning these rutted roads, "Though modern industry, assisted by various Turn-pike Acts, has widened the upper part and filled up the lower, yet they were all visible in the days of our fathers, and are traceable even in ours."

This painstaking historian places the ancient centre of the town at Old Cross from the number of streets which lead towards it, and the fact of the position of St. Martin's Church. It is difficult, indeed, when contemplating modern Birmingham with its fine streets, magnificent public buildings, and general appearance of wealth, industry, and prosperity, to realise that the ancient houses were of a type similar to those at Shrewsbury and Chester. Built principally of timber, with the space between the beams wattled and plastered over with mortar; others of slightly more recent date being of bricks and plaster.

The first streets that were paved are said to have been High Street, the Bull Ring, Corn Cheaping, Digbeth, St. Martin's Lane, Egbaston Street, Moat Lane, Spiceal Street, and part of Moor Street, and the streets where the fairs were held. These formed the boundaries of the town in the thirteenth century; and from this period onwards there was a distinct and gradual increase of area and also of improvements of an uninterrupted character.

The most stirring event in the history of Birmingham itself was the attack made upon it by Prince Rupert on April 5, 1643, during the Civil War. It created an immense amount of additional antagonism towards the Cavaliers on the part of the inhabitants, whose sympathies from the outset of the quarrel between King and Parliament had been with the latter.

The town was at that period but a small one of about 6000 inhabitants. But it had caused the King's party much trouble by having on several occasions intercepted messengers between the scattered Royalist forces. These messengers were sent to Coventry and imprisoned. Prince Rupert's attack was chiefly prompted by two reasons: the desire for plunder and the intention to frustrate the completion of the fortifications and earthworks the inhabitants had commenced. He apparently anticipated only slight resistance.

The attack was commenced between two and three in the afternoon; two assaults were repulsed, but eventually the Royalist horse forced an entry. The Cavaliers rode through the town, with the Earl of Denbigh at their head, "like so many furies." People were shot at their windows, at their doors, and in the streets. Having possessed themselves of the town the Royalists commenced to pillage it. Next day on leaving the town they set fire to it in many places.

The effect of all this harshness naturally was to make the Birmingham folk even more Parliamentarian than before.

The Plague

The history of Birmingham appears to have been uneventful for more than twenty years after the memorable visit of Prince Rupert and his Cavaliers. And the next happening of any great moment was the outbreak of the plague in 1665, which was said to have been brought to the town in a box of clothes by a carrier, which he deposited at the White Hart Inn. The visitation seems to have been a severe one, for it was found impossible to inter the victims in the usual burying-ground, and a full acre of land was set aside at Lady Wood Green (known for many years after as the "pest" ground) for the reception of those who had died of the plague. The town soon, however, appears to have recovered from this misfortune, and made, during the ensuing years, from the time of the Restoration to the commencement of the eighteenth century, a period of forty years, a progress which can scarcely be considered as otherwise than remarkable, demonstrated by figures given by Hutton, the accuracy of which has never been impuned.

At the Restoration the number of streets appears to have been fifteen, though all were not complete; whilst there were some 907 houses and 5472 inhabitants. In the year 1700 the streets had increased in number to 28, the houses to 2504, and the inhabitants to 15,032. Thirty-one years later the streets had doubled, the houses had nearly doubled, and the inhabitants had increased almost in the same proportion; whilst at the commencement of the last decade of the eighteenth century the streets had quadrupled

from the last figures, the houses had done the same, and the inhabitants had increased in like ratio.

But only ten years later Birmingham saw one of the few periods of temporary decline, when, owing to the stagnation in trade, consequent upon the French war, the population decreased nearly 4000; and the entry of many younger men of Birmingham into the army, and the exodus of masters and journeymen, left upwards of 1500 houses uninhabited. Notwithstanding the set-back caused by the war, only seven years later there was a distinct revival and reaction, and nearly 2000 additional houses were erected, with an increase of population more than sufficient to occupy them, as well as all the other houses which had fallen vacant.

In the latter half of the seventeenth century Birmingham made remarkable strides, and during this period sprang up an increasing demand for many of the articles manufactured there, and the firearm trade soon became a very important and lucrative one. Hampered by no charters or ancient Corporative customs, the town attracted to itself reformers of all kinds, and also skilled workmen, drawn hither by the freedom of manufacture which existed. The iniquitous "Five Mile" and similar Acts had served to drive many wealthy and able men out of corporate towns. In Birmingham these found a "city of refuge," with fewer restrictions; and with their coming the industrial energy and initiative of the town was greatly and speedily increased. During the eighteenth century these forces were continuously at work, and in the

latter half the fullest development was attained and manufactures of all kinds, including iron, hardware, brass, steel, and other articles became wonderfully advanced.

Not a little of this prosperity was undoubtedly directly traceable to the practice which obtained of letting large portions of land at low ground rents and on long leases ; thereby giving notable encouragement to the erection of buildings, both residential and commercial, in the centre of the town and in the contiguous suburbs.

Quite early in the century cotton spinning by machinery had been introduced and tried by Lewis Paul and John Wyatt, and somewhere about 1780 a cotton mill was built, but only to prove an unsuccessful experiment, afterwards to be converted into one for metal rolling.

One of the truly great events in the history of Birmingham of this period — nay, of any period — was the foundation by Matthew Boulton of the famous Soho works in 1763. He possessed unbounded enterprise, enthusiasm, and taste, and his original business in Birmingham itself as a "toy-maker," manufacturing sword-hilts, buckles, brooches, and other ornaments, increased rapidly, and he was compelled to transfer it to larger and better premises. It was to Boulton that James Watt ultimately came in despair at not being able to get his newly invented steam-engine well and carefully made. As events proved, he had come to the right man, and an engine factory, from which the whole world was eventually supplied, was speedily

erected. The partnership lasted many years ; Boulton, who was a skilled mechanic, was also, above all, a good business man—which Watt was not—and but for him it is more than probable that the inventor would have failed to attain either practical or financial success and recognition.

Of this great workshop of Soho, one of the greatest early factors in Birmingham's ultimate triumph as a manufacturing and industrial centre, Boulton is reputed to have said, "I supply here what all the world desires to have—Power." And the founder of Soho, through stormy and even occasionally dangerous times, doggedly persevered, and by great powers of initiative and control secured for himself and for Watt large fortunes, and did much to assist in the general and speedy progress of the town by the invention of machinery and the practical application of the "new power."

But Boulton, who has left so deep a mark upon Birmingham history of his time, was by no means a mere ingenious manufacturer and good business man. He was a magnetic and personal force, which gathered around him and attracted to Soho from all parts of the world men of genius, scientists, and others. The "Soho circle" or "Lunar Club," called the latter from the fact that it met only when there was a full moon, on account of the ill-lit and dangerous condition of the streets, was one of the most famous institutions of its kind of the age, and, indeed, probably of any succeeding age.

To his house at one time or another came many men

destined to prove famous or who were already so. Dr. Darwin; William Murdock, the inventor of—amongst other things—gas-lighting for houses; Priestly, with his keen brain and recent discoveries; John Baskerville, with his type, paper, and printing, which "astonished the Librarians of Europe"; Dr. Withering, the noted botanist; Joseph Berington, the Roman Catholic historian; and many others who brightened and made notable what may fairly be called "the golden age" of Birmingham's eighteenth-century progress, and who were the initiators of the advances made in after years.

The great Soho works, in the history of which is, in fact, enshrined much of that relating to the early days of engineering, have passed away; the engine factory having been removed to Smethwick in 1848, after the death of James Watt, the son of the inventor. The site on which Boulton's house stood is now occupied by streets and terraces of unromantic houses. But the memory of Soho lingers in the name of an open space, and in that of streets and roads.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the desire to modernise Birmingham and to erect buildings with some pretension to architectural beauty seemed to have concerned the inhabitants, and we read, the town "is daily improving in the style of her buildings; there are now architects of the first eminence in the town, and others rapidly rising into notice."

The progress of Birmingham during the latter half of the nineteenth century has been wonderfully steady and marked.

Of the ancient town there are nowadays scarcely any survivals ; certainly few buildings of any public character, although "the mansion house of tymber" which Leland saw and specially mentioned, still remains in the guise of the "Old Crown Inn," with several other quaint, timbered houses in the district of Deritend.

In the old Bull Ring, an historic spot used in former times for the sport of bull baiting, stands St. Martin's Church, the most notable and authentic building in Birmingham, for the modern building erected in 1872-75, at the cost of a sum of nearly £30,000, stands on the site of a Norman church of undoubted antiquity. In this ancient fabric, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, many additions and alterations were effected, and the walls of the old church were formerly plentifully adorned with frescoes, representing amongst other scenes St. Martin on horse-back giving part of his cloak to a beggar.

Nowadays the only portion of the old church still standing is in the tower, but there are some fine altar tombs with recumbent figures of the old lords of Birmingham in the chancel. One is believed to be that of the third William de Bermingham, who was at the siege of Belgrade in France in 1297, and was taken prisoner there. There are also many other interesting and important memorials, and some extremely fine modern stained glass by the late William Morris.

St. Philip's Church, which occupies a fine site fronting on Colmore Row, has an importance other than its architecture from the fact that it is now the

LONG COMPTON.

pro-Cathedral. Finely situated, this handsome building has an added grace and importance from its elevated and isolated position. The church stands upon ground which was originally part of a farm called Horse Close, afterwards Barley Close, and the land was given by one Robert Phillips and the church named after the saint and also the founder. It was commenced in 1711 from designs by Thomas Archer, a pupil of John Vanbrugh, who was also the architect for the church of St. John, at Westminster. The building was consecrated in 1715, although not finished till four years later. It is said to have cost only £5000.

The church of St. John at Deritend possesses a somewhat remarkable history. It is a chapel in the parish of Aston, and was the one referred to by Leland as "a propper chappel" in 1538. At that date it was a picturesque and interesting Early English building, which unhappily was demolished about a century ago, and re-erected in the form of an uninspiring structure of Georgian plainness in brick. It contains the bust of John Rogers, a native of the district, who was the first martyr in the days of the Marian persecution. The original church was founded in 1375 by thirteen persons, who had found themselves on many occasions unable to reach the mother church at Aston owing to floods. These provided between them a handsome endowment in lands, worth at that time ten marks (about £6 : 13 : 4, and nowadays some £450), the original Charter and Licence in Mortmain are in the

Reference section of the Public Library, and bear dates 1381 and 1383.

The chaplain was formerly strangely elected by household suffrage, both men and women voting. The last election was in 1889, when a fierce contest was waged and continued for over a month in thorough-going electioneering style, ultimately thinning out the candidates to two in number, who went to the final poll, which lasted a day.

Roman Catholicism has a strong following in the city, and the Roman Catholic Cathedral, dedicated to St. Chad, a seventh-century Bishop of Lichfield, is a large and handsome though modern building. Erected from designs by A. W. Pugin in 1839-41 in the Decorated style, it forms one of the principal churches of Birmingham. In it are some fine modern stained glass; a sixteenth-century carved oak pulpit brought from Louvain; and the remains of its dedicatory saint, which are traditionally stated to have been removed from Lichfield Cathedral at the time of the Reformation, and more or less miraculously preserved, and ultimately brought here.

The new era of the town's history, progress, and wealth began in 1875, when the late Joseph Chamberlain was elected Mayor.

It is impossible in so brief a sketch as is possible within the scope of the present volume to deal in detail with the many reforms, the growth and commercial expansion which the last forty years have brought about. Birmingham of to-day, with its magnificent Town

Hall, Council House, Museum, and Art Gallery, containing some notable modern as well as older pictures, and a fine collection of the work of the pre-Raphaelite School; Free Library; Mason University College; Great Western Arcade; Midland Institute; Edward VI.'s Grammar School, the ancient foundation nowadays housed in a modern building by Sir Charles Barry, R.A., in the Tudor style; Bluecoat School, founded in 1727 for the education of orphans of both sexes; and many other important commercial, educational, and social institutions, and its fine parks, may be said to represent a modern city of unique convenience and considerable structural beauty.

Birmingham, too, has not been without generous benefactors, to whom it owes a debt not easily repaid. To all who know anything of the city's history the names of the Rylands, Jaffray, Tangye, Feeny, and Colmore families will at once occur.

About modern Birmingham there is indeed a spaciousness and air of modernity which strikes the visitor almost from the first moment of his introduction to the town; and although essentially a trade centre, there certainly hangs about this city, which has owed in later years so much to the energy, wisdom, and enterprise of such men as John Thackray Bunce, Joseph Chamberlain, Josiah Mason, George Dawson, George Tangye, Samuel Timmins, and Philip Henry Muntz, a certain element of even romantic interest, which, however, is that attaching to modern industry rather than to survivals of ancient greatness.

Naturally so great an industrial centre as Birmingham played a great and even distinguished part in the Great War. Very early in the struggle the city became one of the most important munitions centres in the Kingdom. Situated in the heart of England, and far distant from the sea coast, it seemed peculiarly suited for the site of a great national arsenal, quite irrespective of the fact that for many years the manufacture of guns and other weapons of war had formed a part of its most prosperous industrial life.

Although Zeppelins in several of their wanderings over the face of England, intent upon inflicting injury upon this home of war-time industry, are reported to have hovered over Birmingham, no considerable material damage resulted.

Within a very short time of Mr. Lloyd George assuming the reins of Government and the responsibility for the supply of the vast quantities of munitions which were found necessary for an energetic and successful prosecution of the war to final victory, Birmingham became one immense area of feverish war activity. Factories which in times of peace were employed in the production of agricultural implements for use throughout the world; the making of "Birmingham" jewellery; the provision of "trade" articles for barter with the uncivilised tribes of Central Africa, New Guinea, the South Seas, and elsewhere were speedily adapted for the more sinister purposes of the great conflict in which almost the whole of the civilised world found itself gradually becoming more or less directly involved.

Birmingham was engaged in beating its ploughshares into machine-guns, and its reaping hooks into bayonets, an inversion of the Biblical dream picture of the arts of peace.

Munitions were turned out in such vast quantities that the human mind cannot grasp their sum. Small arms ammunition by the thousand million rounds, shells in their millions, machine-guns in their thousands, and materials raw and otherwise of all kinds for munitions of war and clothing poured constantly from the factories of the city.

A darkened city it was!

But behind shuttered and curtained windows there was all the time unceasing work, the colossal output was maintained, and the titanic struggle of human brains, sinews, muscles, and sheer endurance went on.

In a word, Birmingham took its place among the foremost cities of sacrifice in the Empire she played so great a part to save.

The appeal to her manhood, her womanhood, her patriotism was never made in vain, whether it was for munitions made by tens of thousands of tons, or for money with which to assist national finance by way of munificent subscriptions to Loans, and the purchase of many hundreds of thousands of War Savings Certificates.

And the records of Birmingham men, in the Warwickshire and other regiments which covered themselves with "an eternal weight of glory" in the field, will form a noble page in national history as long as time endures.

CHAPTER IX

THE STORY OF SOME ANCIENT MANOR-HOUSES—BADDESLEY CLINTON — PACKINGTON OLD HALL — MAXSTOKE CASTLE—ASTLEY CASTLE

In the north-western portion of the county lies a group of historic houses and churches which present many unique features. One of the most interesting of these, distant some seven miles from Warwick and situated amidst lovely scenery, is Baddesley Clinton, a typical old moated manor-house, such as a few years ago was associated in Christmastide publications with stories of ghosts and midnight villainy. This exquisite survival of ancient domestic architecture is a low-built house with grey stone walls, timbered gables, and battlemented parapets. It forms an unusually fine specimen of the old fortified manorial dwellings dating from the fifteenth century, and nowadays, alas! becoming fewer and fewer by reason of destruction by fire or the exigencies of the times.

During its early history the manor appears to have had several owners. From the middle of the thirteenth century, for a period of about a hundred years, it be-

longed to the Clinton family of Coleshill, becoming in the last years of the fifteenth century the property of one Nicholas Brome, at whose death it passed in 1517 to his daughter and co-heiress, Constantia, who had married in 1497 Sir Edward Ferrers, a grandson of William Lord Ferrers of Groby, in which family the estates have ever since remained. It is the boast of the family that their ancestry came over with the Conqueror, and there is little doubt that the boast is no idle one.

The Ferrers family of Baddesley Clinton are descended from the second son of the Earl who met his death so unromantically on the bridge at St. Neots; Groby passing into the hands of the Greys. A younger son of the Ferrers of Tamworth was the father of Sir Edward Ferrers, who by marriage with Constance Brome became the possessor of Baddesley Clinton.

During the Civil War Baddesley Clinton, although its owners appear to have sided neither with the King nor the Parliament, was plundered by the forces of the latter; and in a MS. of the period one finds a statement of some of the booty which was acquired by the Roundheads. This included a grey and a bright bay horse, which were led away by the troopers, one of them with a rich plush saddle trimmed round about the skirts with gold lace and gold fringe; arms and armour; gunpowder; cash taken from a desk; a Geneva Bible, and even the linen from the drying room! But the family appear to have succeeded in maintaining their neutral attitude, and at the Restora-

tion were still in quiet enjoyment of their estates; which, however, had become smaller, and from the fact of their fidelity to Roman Catholicism were little likely in succeeding centuries to be added to.

The last squire of the line was Marmion Edward Ferrers, a noted antiquarian who lived quietly at Baddesley Clinton, and died leaving no heir; his widow married a second time Edward Heneage Dearing, Esq., the present owner of the property.

As was the case with most manor-houses of ancient times, and more especially with those belonging to Catholic families, there were several secret hiding-places at Baddesley Clinton, constructed for the salvation of the ministering Romish priests, or for other fugitives in times of need. Near the chapel is a well-like shaft of stone, formerly provided with steps or projecting stones, by means of which a fugitive was able to reach a secret passage extending round nearly the whole length of two sides of the house, and giving access to a small water-gate opening on the moat, at which a boat was kept at hand for use in cases of emergency. On the eastern side of the building adjoining the banqueting room is a secret chamber some six feet square, which has a bench running round it. This of recent years has been walled up, but the narrow staircase leading to it behind the wainscoting remains in its original condition.

There are probably other chambers in this ancient building, the existence of which may possibly at some future time be descovered quite by accident, as have so

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.

many other hiding-places in similar houses throughout the country.

The house, one of the most ancient in Warwickshire, is approached by a brick bridge of two arches crossing the moat, and the entrance is through an archway under an embattled tower, which although giving a distinction to this, the north-eastern front of the building, is apparently of no great age. The door is an ancient one, studded thickly with iron bolts, guarding the house at the inner end of the bridge ; the stabling being at the outer end and separate from the house.

The building within the bounds of the moat forms three sides of a quadrangle, which encloses a quaint garden with paths running between close-mown turf and clipped yew bushes. The old mansion is rich in beautiful panelled rooms and wonderful carved mantelpieces. On the left-hand side of the entrance to the house itself is an anteroom leading to the great Hall. In this beautiful oak-panelled chamber is an unusually handsome Renaissance fireplace of carved stone, dating from the middle of the seventeenth century, and ornamented with seven shields of the family arms painted on the stone-work, the last shield commemorating the marriage of Edward Ferrers and Ann Peyto in 1611. The chief features of the room, however, are the heraldic devices of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which adorn the windows ; an old seventeenth century cabinet of quaint design, the front of which is divided into twenty small panels and ornamented with groups of cupids, nymphs,

and satyrs ; several dower chests ; and a silver twisted horn, traditionally stated to date from the year 1400, and to have been presented to the Lord de Ferrers of that time by the French Ambassador at the Court of King Henry IV. There is also an interesting leather bottle fished out of the moat a few years ago ; and an old buff leather coat which may have been a relic of the unwelcome visitation made by the Parliamentarians during the Civil War.

The drawing-room is panelled oak and has oaken benches in the recesses of the window, and is rendered notable by the large carved oak fireplace, which is ornamented by the arms of the Ferrers of Groby. In this room, too, is a fine portrait of Sir Walter Raleigh, attributed by several authorities to Marc Garrard.

In the southern angle of the hall is a handsome staircase leading to the enclosed gallery running round the inner part of three sides of the house, and giving access to the upper story rooms.

The State bedroom, which contains a very fine and elaborately carved chimney-piece, reaching from the floor to the ceiling, is on the left of the staircase, and this room is finely panelled in oak, as are so many of the others of this most interesting house.

In the Oratory or domestic chapel of the house is a most curious and interesting Flemish Sanctus bell, dating from 1555, and having on it a small incised female effigy, supposed to represent the wife or daughter of Nicholas Brome ; there is also an inscription, IHESVS ES MINEN NAEM.

The Ghost Room

The banqueting hall of the house is situated over the gateway, and is a fine room lighted by a mullioned window, and containing some good and very ancient oak carving and panelling, and also some beautiful tapestry. Unfortunately the high pitched roof of open timber-work has been covered by a plaster ceiling.

A touch of romance still hangs about the adjoining room, which is the library, but is traditionally known as the "Ghost Room," and was in former times popularly supposed to be haunted, possibly by the spirit of Nicholas Brome or that of the parish priest he found, according to Dugdale, "chocking his wife under the chin, whereat he was so enraged that he presently kil'd him." For this offence the murderer had to obtain the King's pardon and also the Pope's, who enjoined him to do something towards expiation of his crime. In pursuance of this mandate he built the "tower-steeple," and bought three bells for it, as well as carrying out other additions and alterations to the thirteenth-century church of Baddesley.

In the church are many monuments of the Bromes and Ferrers, and also some beautiful and ancient stained glass in the east window. In connection with the manor of Baddesley Clinton there is an interesting entry in the Manor Rolls, recording that the Shakespeare family held lands in Baddesley as early as 1389, and it is possible that these were the remote ancestors of the poet himself.

It seems not improbable that much of the oak

panelling and most of the carved mantelpieces in the house were placed there by Edward Ferrers, son of the antiquarian, about the middle of the seventeenth century, or perhaps rather earlier. The decorations within the house make plain for the student of architecture, and to the eyes of the skilled antiquarian, the three chief periods of its history. The outer walls are those of the ancient home of the Bromes, as it came into possession of the Ferrers family ; but inside the house are many evidences of the money spent in its fittings and beautifying by Edward Ferrers towards the middle part of the seventeenth century. Then there is the last period, comprising the black and white timber-work and other restorations carried out by Captain Dering, who found on his accession to the property the building suffering from the ravages of both age and neglect.

Few manor-houses in Warwickshire possess greater charms than Baddesley Clinton, and the views from the upper windows into the ivy-covered courtyard, with its wealth of flower-beds and blossom, are charming to a degree.

Some eight miles north-east of Baddesley Clinton, through a stretch of pretty country, lies Packington Park, famous for its ancient oaks, and made unusually picturesque by the presence of its sheets of ornamental water. Packington Hall is now the seat of the Earl of Aylesford, a substantial building, set amid a pleasant park, built by Sir Clement Fisher in 1693, and enlarged and faced with stone three-quarters of a century later.

Maxstoke Castle

About a mile to the north-east of Maxstoke Priory lies Maxstoke Castle, surrounded by fine trees, so retired that its very existence might be unsuspected by those who pass along the road at the foot of the avenue.

Few houses in England can be exactly compared with this wonderfully preserved survival of medieval times, which is set in so picturesque a position, surrounded by trees of a deer park of considerable size. All who have visited Maxstoke are agreed concerning the almost unique interest that this ancient fortified residence possesses for students of architecture and of the manners and customs of past ages. In Maxstoke, indeed, there is little to break the medieval spell which seems to hang so closely about its time-worn walls, and be so in keeping with its retired situation. As one approaches it by the fine avenue of elms leading, for the last portion of it, in a straight line to the gate-house and bridge, one almost, indeed, expects to see watchers upon the twin towers, and to find one's ingress barred by closely-shut doors and lowered portcullis.

A beautiful survival of a past age, now the residence of the Tangye family, whose name is so intimately connected with the neighbouring city of Birmingham, the house has been closely identified with many historic names and strenuous deeds of English history.

It dates from the period when the great and strongly fortified castles—more fortresses, indeed, than residences—were giving place to dwelling-houses, well-defended, it is true, but which, though still protected by walls, towers, and even drawbridges and portcullises, were

yet an indication of the change bound to come when such defences became unnecessary.

The foundations of the Castle, which is completely enclosed within an embattled *enceinte*, and is protected by a deep and broad moat and defended by strong angle towers, were laid by William de Clinton under a licence from Edward III. in 1345. The great entrance, a survival of the old barbican, is beneath or rather between two tall and formidable towers ; the ancient drawbridge having been replaced by a stone bridge crossing the moat, and leading from the avenue of elms to the courtyard. But although both drawbridge and portcullis are gone, the grooves in which the latter was lowered still remain, as do the ancient oaken doors scarred by the weather of centuries, and perhaps by evidences of attack. The Castle itself lies in one of the most beautiful districts of England, almost midway between Birmingham and Coventry.

At Maxstoke in ancient times resided a family of the name of Oddingsells, who were evidently of great importance in the district, as they possessed all the feudal privileges of gallows and tumbril, and assay of bread and beer. Edmund Oddingsells, who died without issue in Edward I.'s reign, had, however, several sisters, to whom he left his property ; Ida the eldest having Maxstoke for her share, which passed to John de Clinton on her marriage with him.

This John de Clinton was one of the great barons of his time, and he accompanied Edward I. on his invasion of Scotland in 1296, and for his assistance

had conferred on him some of the possessions of Malcolm Drummond. Thus it is seen Maxstoke in very early times became identified with the doings of men who played a conspicuous part in the affairs of their country. The mother of Ida, the wife of John de Clinton, was Elizabeth, daughter of the famous William Longespée, Earl of Salisbury. John de Clinton left two sons, the second of whom was the builder of the castle in its present form, although there undoubtedly was an older house standing on the site, of which some fragments have been discovered incorporated into the base of the existing building.

William de Clinton was a man of note, for he held the office of Justice of Chester, Constable of Dover Castle, Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Admiral of the Western Seas. He also had the custody of the King's forests from the Trent southward ; and in 1337 was made Earl of Huntingdon. By his will, dated 1354, the Castle was left to his nephew, a Sir John de Clinton, for whom he appears to have designed it. This John de Clinton was the son of his elder brother John, and was, therefore, the grandson of the first possessor of Maxstoke of the Clinton line. The family were barons by writ, and the new owner was a soldier, who had fought through the French war, and was present at Poitiers and other battles, and was also at one time Constable of Windsor Castle. His grandson, who succeeded him, was known as Lord Say, his mother, the first wife of Sir John de Clinton, having been Idonia, the sister and heiress of William de Say.

Lord Say was, like his grandfather, a soldier, and proved a great benefactor to Maxstoke Priory. He was succeeded by his son, another John, who in 1437 exchanged the castle with Humphrey, Earl of Stafford, for other manors in Northamptonshire, the reason for which exchange is not known.

The last of the De Clintons of Maxstoke was also a soldier, who had the misfortune to be captured in the French war and to suffer a long term of imprisonment. Humphrey, Earl of Stafford, the new owner of Maxstoke, who was made a Knight of the Garter in 1429, and was created Duke of Buckingham in 1444, was Lieutenant Governor of Normandy and Calais, and Ambassador to France. He had also another distinction conferred upon him, that of precedence before all other Dukes who might thenceforward be created, excepting only descendants of the King. He was a warm supporter of the Lancastrian cause and, owing to his marriage with Margaret Beaufort, daughter and heiress of Edmund Duke of Somerset, was related to the Royal House. He fell at the battle of Northampton, July 10, 1460, when leading the Lancastrian forces, one of his sons having been killed at the battle of St. Albans five years previously; and he proved on his death a great benefactor to the destitute poor, some of whom he directed should carry tapers at his funeral, and pray for the repose of his soul.

It was Buckingham who strengthened the oaken doors of Maxstoke by sheets of iron bearing his arms

SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE.

and supporters, and also the "burning nave and knot," which was the ancient badge of the house.

It does not appear that Buckingham made Maxstoke by any means his chief residence, but the names of many of the constables he appointed, and of those who came after him, have been placed on record.

The castle and estates were forfeited by the second Duke and have had during its history many owners.

The dwelling-house occupies the north-west angle of the inner court. It is a partly timbered house, the front portion having been rebuilt in the seventeenth century, and some changes have been made since that date.

At the south end of the Great Hall was formerly the chapel, the west window of which, in the late Decorated period, still remains. The kitchen was somewhat strangely placed adjoining this, and communication between it and the hall must have been carried on across the chapel, the lower part of which is nowadays used as a butler's pantry, and the upper part a corridor to the Great Hall. In the chapel the marriage of John Talbot, afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury, and Catherine, daughter of the Duke of Buckingham, took place in 1457.

The great Baronial Hall, with a dais at one end, is on the first floor, and forms a handsome apartment lighted by three windows. On the west side there is a fine carved mantelpiece of coloured stone, ornamented with the numerous quarterings of the Dilke family, and bearing the following quaint inscriptions :—

Pennatus Sidera Morte

Where no woode is, No tale-bearers,
Ye fire goeth out ; Strife ceaseth.

The room contains some good pictures, amongst which is a full-length portrait of Charles II. by Sir Peter Lely. In the hall are also some interesting relics of former times, such as stone cannon balls, iron balls, pipe bowls found in the moat, some fine armour, and a pair of jack-boots worn by one of the family at the Battle of the Boyne.

The Oak Drawing-Room is a beautiful apartment, distinguished by a magnificently carved mantelpiece, and a unique carved doorway forming a sort of inner porch, and with the door very deeply panelled. There is in this room a curious picture of the last jester of Maxstoke, 1681, one Tom Grainger, who is depicted with an owl perched on his shoulder, and pipe in hand.

A relic which never fails to interest the visitor is an antique oak chair, which tradition states was brought from an old house at Bosworth Field. It bears on the brass plate attached to it the following inscription : "In this chair King Henry VII. was crowned at Bosworth Field, A.D. 1485."

The Tower Drawing-Room is also oak panelled, and contains a fine mantelpiece. Above it is the bedroom known as Henry VII.'s ; and over that again is the top tower bedroom, from which beautiful views of the park and moat are to be obtained.

The Dining-room on the ground floor contains a sideboard which is stated to have been made out of a

tree at which Oliver Cromwell practised marksmanship in Coleshill Park, and also some interesting portraits of the Fetherstons and Fetherstonhaughs.

Scarcely a room at Maxstoke but contains something either in its decorations or its furniture of great interest; and, indeed, it is a matter for congratulation on the part of all those interested in architectural survivals and the preservation of historic houses that the castle presents in this twentieth century so interesting and perfect an example of the fortified manor-houses of ancient times. Maintained, let it be added, with all the loving care which such a unique treasure-house of antiquity deserves.

Some six miles to the north-east of Maxstoke is situated Astley Castle, prettily placed in Arbury Park. Although known as a castle, it is in reality rather an example of the defensive manor-house which came into being when residences of a more formidable nature had become no longer necessary. The house is surrounded by a moat, which is picturesquely overhung with foliage, and spanned by a bridge admitting to the house through an arched gateway.

Within a mile and a half of the church, and reached by a lovely avenue through Hawk's Wood, is South Farm, where, on November 22, 1819, was born Mary Ann Evans, afterwards to become famous as "George Eliot." The building is quite a small farm-house, having one bay and a gabled east wing, and is coated with rough cast. It stands pleasantly situated a little distance on the right of the Park Road to Griff.

"George Eliot's" father, Mr. Robert Evans, was agent for the Arbury Estate, and the family afterwards, whilst the future novelist was quite a child, removed to a larger house at Griff.

As was perhaps not unnatural, "George Eliot" drew much of her early inspiration and local colour from the immediate neighbourhood in which she was born, and in "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story," which she commenced to write on Christmas Day 1856, Astley Church appears under the disguise of "Knebley Church"; whilst Sir Robert Newdigate, who collected so many Art treasures for his beautiful home of Arbury, figures in the same story under the name of "Sir Christopher Cheverel."

CHAPTER X

THE STORY AND ROMANCE OF SOME SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE MANOR-HOUSES

Some twelve miles to the south-east of Stratford lies Compton Wynyates, one of the most interesting and picturesque manor-houses in Warwickshire, reached by a road scarcely more than a by-way from Upper Tysoe, and lying beautifully situated and secluded in a thickly wooded dell. Scarcely seen until one comes quite close to it, at first sight it gives merely an impression of a multitude of gables, turrets, and chimneys, with the central porch flanked by two picturesque half-timbered gables partly overgrown by creepers and ivy.

The whole building except the gables is battlemented, and the ancient chimneys of zigzag and cable pattern give it an additional and unique picturesqueness. The old moat which formerly surrounded it has been filled in, with the exception of a portion to the north, now enclosing a beautiful flower-garden, which was very probably in former days covered with buildings.

The name Compton Wynyates is supposed by many to have been derived from the fact that in ancient times

a vineyard was situated on the slopes which surround the house, and the weight of tradition is also in favour of this derivation. The property has been in the possession of the Compton family since the reign of King John, and although records are lacking to support the view, it seems possible that it came into the hands of the Comptons at the date of the Conquest. But, although in the reign of Edward III. one John de Compton was a knight for the shire in Parliament, the family appear not to have gained any great distinction until the beginning of the sixteenth century.

At the end of the fifteenth century William Compton succeeded his father Edmund, but being then only eleven years of age he became a ward of the Crown, and was brought up with Henry VIII. His association with the latter was destined to bear very material fruit in the way of advancement in later years, as, becoming a great favourite with Henry, he eventually received several important appointments in the State.

Old Fuller, the chronicler, says of Compton, "He was highly and deservedly a favourite to this King, so that, in the Court, no laymen, abating onely Charles Brandon (in whom affection and affinity met), was equall unto him."

To this William Compton the King granted an augmentation to his arms from his own Royal ensigns and devices, and at the beginning of his reign made him custodian of the castle at Fulbroke, which had fallen into ruins.

About 1509 Sir William Compton, who had gained

great distinction at the Battle of Spurs, and had been knighted for his gallantry, pulled down the castle, and with part of the materials—consisting in the main of some of the stone, the chimneys, and part of the woodwork—set about building himself a mansion at Compton Wynyates. Tradition asserts that the chimneys were carried from the ruined castle, for use in the new mansion, in panniers on the backs of horses and donkeys. Thus was built one of the most interesting and picturesque mansions of Warwickshire, and, indeed, of any county in England.

The house was erected round a quadrangle 75 feet square. The four sides of the building, however, were not designed with exactitude, the north being 140 feet, the south 146 feet, the east 155 feet, and the west 152 feet in length. Over the arch of the entrance porch are carved the arms of Henry VIII., supported by a griffin and a greyhound, above which is a crown with the inscription, "DOM . REX . HENRICVS . OCTAV." On the hollow mouldings of the drip-stone are figures of lizards, other animals, and roses ; whilst on each side is the Tudor double rose of York and Lancaster beneath a crown. The left-hand spandril is filled in with a device of Catherine of Aragon formed by the Castle of Castile and the pomegranate of Granada : also a sheaf of arrows, the badge of her mother Isabella. The right-hand spandril contains the portcullis, which was a badge of Henry VIII. Anciently there was, of course, a drawbridge, and inside the archway on either side are stone benches and doors which led out to the moat

when the drawbridge was raised. The old oak doors contain a wicket, and still show traces of bombardment from callivers and matchlocks. But these doors, which are strongly panelled inside, would appear to have successfully resisted all the attacks made upon them.

On passing beneath the entrance porch into the inner court one is at once struck by the beautiful bay-window on the right-hand side containing eight lights, with mullions and transoms and carved panels, and battlements above. Between two windows on the left of the door is a lion's head carved in stone, which is worth notice, as there is a tradition that on festive occasions it ran with wine, which was supplied from the inside of the house and ran into a basin formerly fixed below the head. This courtyard is rendered more picturesque than even it would otherwise be by the beautiful flowers and creepers, more especially the fuchsias, which adorn it.

On entering the house one passes the Buttery on the left, divided from the Hall itself by an oak screen carved in the linen-fold pattern, and from this a short passage leads to the kitchens, which still contain the large recessed fireplaces of Tudor times.

Between the chapel and the Hall is the great parlour, with its oak panelling and plaster ceiling bearing the arms of Compton and Spencer, built in the reign of Elizabeth by William Compton, first Earl of Northampton.

The great Hall itself extends the full height of the house, and possesses a fine open-timbered roof, the

STRATFORD-ON-AVON—THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

beams of which spring from a richly carved cornice. The roof was apparently brought from some older building and reduced in size to fit its present use. It is probable, too, that it originally extended one bay farther, which would give it its true proportions.

At one end is a picturesque half-timbered Minstrel Gallery, with open panel-work, the gallery in the south-east angle being a modern addition.

There is an interesting survival of the games of our ancestors in the huge slab of elm, over 23 feet in length and 30 inches in width, which was made to rest on trèssels, and in all probability was used for playing "shovel-board," a popular amusement in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It was in this Hall that the builder, Sir William Compton, received Henry VIII., with whom he had been at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and doubtless it has been the scene of many almost equally notable festivities during the centuries which have passed since its erection. The Chapel, which is on the south side of the quadrangle, is divided into two portions by an oak screen with a gate in the centre. Over the screen are carved panels, and on the left of the gate on the outer side is one probably representing the scourging of Christ previous to the Crucifixion ; whilst that on the left represents a female figure on a pedestal intended apparently for the Virgin Mary, the stag having reference to the legend of St. Hubert. Within the screen on the left are representations of the seven deadly sins, each mounted on a horse with a small

demon behind, urging on the rider. At the head of the procession is a monk, and the figure of the devil is seen standing ready to receive them. On the right-hand side there is a carving of figures (probably Twelfth Night mummers) in State robes, having swords in their left hands. The centre panels on both sides of the screen are blank. The general impression is that these carvings, which are certainly of greater age than the house, were brought from Fulbroke Castle, built by John, Duke of Bedford, in the reign of Henry V., the custody of which was given to Sir William Compton by Henry VIII.

The great window on the south-western side of the chapel contains five lights, with cinquefoil heads divided by a transom, and with the spandrils and sill carved. In it was formerly some beautiful painted glass representing the Passion, in which also were depicted the figures of the builder of the house and his wife and three children, and the family arms. The glass was removed to Balliol College, Oxford, during the period of the Civil War. It is difficult to exactly locate the former position of the high altar in reference to the great window, it being possible, as was sometimes the case, that the celebrant took up his position behind it, and thus faced north-east, having his back, of course, towards the window itself.

Amongst the other more notable portions of this fine manor-house, which in its entirety contains eighty rooms with seventeen separate flights of stairs and 275 windows, which in the days of the window tax were

reduced to the number of thirty, is the private dining-room built in the reign of Elizabeth by William Compton, first Earl of Northampton, ornamented with the arms of Compton and Spencer. The carving of the chimneypiece moulding of hard fir-wood is supposed to be the work of Thomas Chippendale, the well-known wood-carver of George II.'s time.

The Music- or Smoking-room is probably a comparatively modern addition to the house, about the year 1738; here too the chimney moulding appears to be the work of Chippendale.

On the second floor, approached by the great staircase, which although occupying its original position is a modern reproduction dating only from 1867, King Charles' room is reached, situated on the north side overlooking the moat. In this room Charles is said to have slept when a guest here. The moat and the upper part of the house could in those days be reached by a spiral staircase just outside the room.

The Drawing-room on the south side of the house is a beautiful room, oak panelled, and with a handsome plaster ceiling placed there in the time of Elizabeth and recently carefully restored. The carving and panelling over the mantelpiece were brought from Canonbury House, which was the manor-house of Islington, purchased by Sir John Spencer, the father of the first Earl, in 1570. The chapel drawing-room, in which are oak carvings and a moulded ceiling, has on the south side hinged panels, and a door which leads into the upper portion of the chapel, and

through which people in the room could hear the service.

Next to this room is the bed-chamber occupied by Henry VIII. when visiting the house, and containing a window in which is some old painted glass. In one of the lights is a Tudor rose intact, and in others there are portions of the arms of Catherine of Aragon. The ceiling, which is interesting and curious, was probably made in the reign of Charles I., and contains the arms of the various royal guests who had honoured the house with their presence, including Henry VIII., Queen Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I.

The Council Chamber in the great tower is reached by a circular staircase, and is notable for its beautiful split oak panelling, exhibiting the grain of the wood in a manner impossible where sawn timber is used. In a small chamber adjoining is a well-hole, probably once forming the entrance to a secret passage communicating with a trap-door in the north wing.

There were in ancient times a large number of secret hiding-places at Compton Wynyates. Next but one to the room of Henry VIII. is a chamber from which there was communication with a secret hiding-place of quite considerable dimensions, reached from it by a stairway of eleven steps only 19 inches wide. In this stairway is an "observation hole," some 10 inches high and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, formerly concealed by the panelling, by means of which the approach of the enemy or of a search party could be watched by the fugitive in hiding. The secret chamber is about seven

feet square, and has two windows and a small fireplace. One of the distinguishing features of the house is the number of its windows and chimneys ; a circumstance that made it extremely difficult for searchers to locate any secret hiding-place, even though furnished with both. Few manor-houses have, or at least had, more numerous places of concealment great and small than Compton Wynyates. In the south-western turret is another hiding-place, stated to have been discovered by Lady Frances Compton about 1770, whilst she was playing there as a child. The story goes that she fell against the plaster-work which concealed the door, and the hollow sound emitted caused investigation to be made. Upon opening the chamber it was found (so tradition states) to contain the skeletons of a woman (a nurse ?) and two children, concealed, it is supposed, at some period of trouble and forgotten.

The famous priests' room or chapel in the roof is reached from the Council Chamber by three newel staircases, and it is even possible there was a fourth in ancient times. This room was undoubtedly used as a chapel, as there were many Popish recusants dwelling in the immediate neighbourhood ; a safer and less unostentatious place of worship was scarcely possible. On an elm shelf below the south-west window are, rudely carved, five consecration crosses, showing that it had been used for the purpose of an altar, and was consecrated according to the rites of the Romish Church. The slab of wood is unique, in that it forms the only known instance of a wooden altar in England.

The part played by the Northampton family in the Civil War was such as to attract the attention of the Parliamentary forces to even so secluded a spot as Compton Wynyates, and on Thursday, June 6, a detachment of Parliamentarians under Major Bridges appeared before the house and besieged it for three days, when it surrendered. The Parliamentarians are reported by Dugdale to have killed many of the deer in the park, and also to have wantonly defaced the ornaments in the Church.

James, the third Earl of Northampton, was ultimately permitted to resume possession of the house and estates on payment of a heavy fine to the Parliamentary party.

Since that time the peace of the fine old grey pile has been undisturbed, and the ninth earl, who was created a marquis in 1812, repaired the house, which had fallen somewhat into decay.

Whether one regards Compton Wynyates from the point of view of an ancient building of romantic and architectural interest, or as a mansion set amid scenery of singular beauty, the place deserves to rank very high indeed among the old houses around which has in past days been woven so much of the glory and romance of England.

But to the interest of the house must be added the charm of the most beautiful and picturesque gardens, maintained all the year round with a care and lavishness which make them some of the most lovely in the country.

Some four miles to the south-west of Wormleighton,

picturesquely situated amidst a group of the Burton Hills, is the tiny village of Burton Dassett, once said to have been a market-town, and then known as Chipping Dassett. It was, however, almost entirely destroyed in the reign of Henry VII. by Sir Edward Belknap; who, then lord of the manor, destroyed the village for the purpose of making enclosures of the lands. He was never punished for this ruthless act, because of the public services he had rendered the King, and at the close of the fifteenth century was granted immunity by his Sovereign from being punished for or questioned concerning his deeds. The village nowadays consists of but two or three farm-houses.

It possesses, however, a fine and very interesting Church of All Saints, and a romantic interest in its ancient beacon, which stands upon the extreme north-western point of the Burton Hills, near the well-known windmill.

The Beacon, which is a stone fourteenth and fifteenth century building, some sixteen feet in height and sixty-two feet in circumference, with walls of extreme thickness, has a conical roof, and projecting from the top are twenty-five corbels, which apparently supported a gallery in former times reached by a wooden ladder or outside stairs. There are two windows, one looking out westward to the Malvern Hills, and another in a north-easterly direction towards Rugby and High Cross. From the summit of this stunted tower there is on a clear day a wonderful prospect to the south-east, only bounded by Irvinghoe, forty miles distant,

where there was another beacon ; whilst to the north-east, twenty miles distant, was Bickenhill Beacon, and to the north north-east High Cross in Leicestershire, and the south south-east Nettlebed in Oxfordshire, twenty-five miles off, with all of which places there was in former days signalling communication by means of a fire lighted in a large cresset, some three feet in diameter and some eighteen inches deep, which was placed upon a pole and fixed to the roof.

Very prettily situated below the Beacon, on the southern spur of the hill, is the church, which in its size and beauty speaks eloquently of the town which once supplied it with worshippers, but is now almost untraceable. The building consists of a chancel, transepts, nave, aisles, and north porch, and at the west end an embattled tower. The architectural features of the exterior, which at once attract attention, are the fine Early English five-light window in the north transept, with its plate tracery.

The north porch is Decorative in design, and is ornamented with ball flower moulding ; the doorway, however, is Norman, as is also that on the south side of the church. It seems more than possible, indeed, that these doorways are survivals of the ancient Norman Church, which the present building superseded. The tower dates from the early part of the fourteenth century, and has exceedingly massive walls. The interior of the church, when viewed from the tower entrance, is unusually impressive and striking.

The interior presents a number of most interesting

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features, for in it is to be found work of the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, and seventeenth centuries. The unusually fine chancel arch is Transitional; the chancel itself is probably early fourteenth-century work.

Some eight miles south-west of Compton Wynyates, retired from the Oxford Road, stands the interesting, picturesque, and considerable manor-house of Little Wolford. With its ancient courtyard, shaded by yews and gay in summer with hollyhocks and other old-time flowers, it is still a fine specimen of a half-timbered stone mansion of the early part of the sixteenth century. Formerly belonging to the Ingraham family, the place has fallen into decay, and from its old estate as a considerable and picturesque mansion.

The Hall, which possesses an open timbered roof, has a good Tudor fireplace, and on the walls are hung old portraits of former owners, and relics in the shape of saddlery and arms, said to have been used during the Civil War. At the back of the house is a chamber with a large oven, in which, tradition asserts, rightly or wrongly, Charles II. hid when a fugitive after Worcester fight.

CHAPTER XI

SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE AND SHAKESPEARE'S TOWN

THE history of Stratford-on-Avon, which takes its name from the Saxon stroete or street, in allusion to the highway on the great north road leading from London to Birmingham and Holyhead, and the *ford*, from the passage of the Avon, which in ancient times ran parallel with the bridge of fourteen arches erected by Sir Hugh Clopton at his own expense in the reign of Henry VII.

The existence of the town can be traced to a date some three centuries prior to the Norman Conquest, but historical details of its early days are scant, although there was in the seventh century a Saxon monastery possessed by Æthelard, one of the subordinate kings of the Wiccians. This foundation was, however, in all probability, dissolved a couple of centuries later. Although doubtless the Celtic invader, the proud legions of Rome, and the Saxon settlers who succeeded the latter, all visited Stratford, which from time immemorial must have been a "sweet and pleasant place of good pasturage and watering," there exist

no records of those long-past days, when the great Forest of Arden covered with an almost impenetrable boscage the whole country which lay between the Avon to the south and Watling Street to the north, to whose depths and fastnesses the original inhabitants retreated in front of the invaders who, afflicting Britain, found their all-conquering way at times even into the heart of England itself.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Stratford are many survivals of Celtic origin in the nomenclature, and there are some authorities who seek to trace some measure of Shakespeare's poetic genius to a remote and long-forgotten Celtic ancestry.

Anciently the town stood almost on the edge of the Wooland or Woodland district, in contradistinction to the Feldon, which was less thickly afforested. At even so late a period as the times of the poet Camden speaks of the greater part of the district as thickly wooded, although possessing tracts of pasture and land given over to corn. Probably the immediate neighbourhood very closely resembled the more thickly-wooded portions of the New Forest of the present day.

The first record of the existence of a place of any importance is the entry in the Domesday Book where, in 1085, is given a valuation of the manor; that then appears to have consisted of barely 2000 acres, which land was in the occupation of men who were to all intents and purposes villeins. The lord of the manor, at the time of the Survey, was the Bishop of Worcester, to whose see the town belonged, King

Ethelred of Mercia having given the monastery in 691 to Egwin, the third bishop of the diocese. This monastery is generally supposed to have been founded by the river side on that exquisite site now occupied by Holy Trinity Church.

Unhappily the history of this monastic foundation, which one may well believe would have been of supreme interest, is almost untraceable. But that it was not an altogether tranquil one may be inferred from the records which state that strife between the succeeding Bishops of Worcester and the Kings of Mercia for its possession and that of the town was not infrequent. Both the town and the monastery undoubtedly in those early times were interdependent, and the first houses, of which there were apparently about two score at the time of the Conquest, were probably near the site of the monastery and river, and were in the neighbourhood of the thoroughfare now known as the Old Town. The manorial mill, at which the inhabitants ground their corn, was situated below the ford, and for this privilege they paid the usual fee taken by the lord of the manor for such convenience. In those early days of Stratford's existence, before grave and scandalous monastic abuses ate into the heart of the system of religious foundations, the countryfolk looked to their ecclesiastical neighbours for active assistance in their labours and lives. This was undoubtedly the case with the old-time inhabitants of Stratford. Soon the town not only grew within its own borders, but spread its influence into the surrounding district, where

clearings were made in the forest, or spaces already open were put under cultivation and homesteads began to spring up.

The first event of any historical importance in connection with "the town of Stratford by Avon," and one destined to have a great effect upon its ultimate growth and importance, was the granting by Richard I., in the year 1197, of the right to hold a market each Thursday. This privilege was obtained for the inhabitants by the then Bishop of Worcester, who charged the townsfolk the sum of sixteen shillings per annum for it. This market was held on the site of the present Rother Market, and to it the drovers brought their cattle weekly from the pastures round about or from the cleared spaces of the Forest of Arden near by. The word itself serves to preserve a memorial of the nature of the institution, "Rother" being Anglo-Saxon for horned cattle.

The market, however, appears to have declined in importance towards the middle of the thirteenth century, but was reinstituted or recovered its lost popularity in the early years of the fourteenth. In addition to the market, which, as we have already pointed out, must have been largely devoted to cattle, five annual fairs were held, which were doubtless a great attraction to the townsfolk and to dwellers in the immediate neighbourhood. Four of these were, we find, largely patronised by drovers, and a great trade was done at them in cattle. The reason for this circumstance is not far to seek when one takes into

consideration the fact that in the immediate vicinity of Stratford there were considerable extents of rich pasture land which, from time immemorial, had been used for herds and flocks. The market frequented by dealers in other goods and by the wandering pedlars of the Middle Ages lay around the High Cross, at the northern end of the High Street, in the space which in those days lay between Rother Market and the ancient timber bridge across the Avon.

To these fairs doubtless came the inhabitants from far and near ; from the scattered homesteads amid the forest glades of Arden, and from the manor-houses which began in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to spring up upon the lands granted by successive kings to their vassals for services rendered or for political reasons. Ultimately there came to Stratford fairs merchants of East Anglia and enterprising traders from so far afield as London. Pedlars there had always been from quite early times.

From the fourteenth century onwards the town appears to have had no lack of sons interested in her welfare, and amongst the earliest benefactors were two brothers named Robert and John de Stratford, and a nephew. The two brothers were destined to become distinguished ornaments of the Church, the second named being in turn Archdeacon of Lincoln in 1319, Bishop of Winchester in 1323, and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1333. Robert being vicar of his native town, then in 1335 Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and two years later he was consecrated Bishop of Chichester.

Ralph de Stratford, the nephew, being raised to the see of London in 1339.

In a measure these two brothers, who were not alone Churchmen but also statesmen, holding in turn the Chancellorship of England, John occupying that high office four times, may be said to have inherited the spirit of benefaction for which they were to be remembered by their native town. Some time during the reign of the first Edward their father had founded a chapel for the famous Guild of the Holy Cross, which in all likelihood was built upon the same site as that occupied by the Guild Chapel now surviving at the corner of Church Street and Chapel Lane. To this chapel Robert de Stratford was appointed the first Master in 1269, on the sanction of Godfrey Giffard, Bishop of Worcester. During the next year the Bishop fostered the newly-founded religious community (which was not, however, ecclesiastical) by granting a forty-days' indulgence to all those who had presented gifts to the Guild. The Register, which exists at the present day, and contains entries from the middle of the fourteenth century, shows that the Guild must have been wealthy, as it possessed property in almost every street of the town.

To his brother Robert belongs the credit of local improvement of the town. In his time the streets were little more than rough tracks or paths connecting the different quarters where the inhabitants had erected dwellings along the roads which led to Henley-in-Arden and Alcester. "The ways," we read, "were of such

unevenness that all who traversed them in rainy days came to their end muddied, and many a cart stuck fast even within the town." Robert de Stratford decided to amend this state of affairs, and to enable him to pave them he, in 1332, obtained leave to tax the produce brought into the town for sale by the farmers and others of the immediate neighbourhood. Thereby he not only conferred a great benefit upon his fellow-townsmen, but also upon those who came to Stratford for business.

The history of the town subsequent to this date until the reign of Edward VI. is very obscure. Indeed, although it is more than probable that it saw something of the Wars of the Roses, and in a measure played its part in the history of the county at large, the records of its progress and the doings of its inhabitants are scanty indeed. The name of one family, however, which became indissolubly connected with Stratford towards the close of the fifteenth century, calls for at least a passing mention. In 1483 Sir Hugh Clopton, of the manor of Clopton, which lies about a mile to the north of Stratford, came to the town and built himself a fine house (as houses were so considered in those days) on the site now occupied by New Place. It was he that, seeing the old bridge of wood which then spanned the Avon was in a "sorry state," erected the stone structure which, since the days of Henry VII. till the present day, has spanned the river with its fourteen arches, except for a short period from 1645-52, when there was at most a temporary passage across,

"HUNGRY" GRAFTON.

owing to the destruction of the second arch of the end farthest from the town by the Parliamentarians. During the reign of the Virgin Queen, Stratford, which had by then become a country town of some little importance and size, made some progress. But in even the spacious days of Elizabeth there was still something of mediæval ways and manners clinging to the life and habits of towns such as Stratford. It is difficult for us, who dwell in the twentieth century, with its almost fanatical cleanliness and idolisation of everything which can be described as progress, to realise the conditions prevailing in places like Stratford, which was probably not worse governed or overseen than other towns of similar size. In a contemporary record one reads with astonishment that a "muck heap" was permitted in no less than six places, the removal of which unsavoury deposits was only suffered twice a year! The streets were, notwithstanding the official refuse heap, often almost impassable for filth, "fine gentlemen and dames passing with difficulty without the soiling of their garments along them." Even a vicar of the town was interrogated by the Council regarding a pig-stye he had erected in the open street, to the obstruction of the common way! The Town Council (Stratford had been granted a Charter of Incorporation in 1553 by Edward VI.) seem to have attempted some control of the inhabitants, but, if one may believe the evidence afforded by contemporary documents, with but scant and qualified success. Rushes were still strewn on the clay floors of

even the best houses, and, what is of greater importance, were not removed too frequently. And although a mandate was issued by the Town Council in the year before Elizabeth ascended the throne for the inhabitants in the winter to hang out a lantern before their doors between the hours of five and eight in the evening, this order was frequently disregarded. It is from these fragmentary records that one is able to gain at least an approximate picture of the ancient town of Stratford in the period just preceding Shakespeare's birth.

Twice during the reign of Elizabeth was the town visited by devastating fires, each of which destroyed some two hundred houses and rendered a large number of the townsfolk homeless and almost destitute. It was the fate that very frequently befell ancient towns, and was repeated again in the year 1614, when upwards of fifty houses, some of them the handsomest in the town, were burned to the ground. Stratford is still rich for a place of its size in architectural survivals of an age when picturesqueness was so marked a feature of domestic buildings, but for these devastating conflagrations what might it not have been ?

The place has never played any important part in history, but at the outset of the Civil War it took the side of the King, and although the Royalist garrison was in 1642 driven out of the town by a Parliamentarian force under Lord Brooke of Warwick, the townsfolk remained faithful in heart to the cause they had espoused, and in 1643 Queen Henrietta Maria and Prince Rupert with a large body of troops were

quartered there. The Queen remained three days, and stayed at New Place, where she was entertained by Mrs. Hall, Shakespeare's daughter.

So far as history making goes, Stratford's part may be said to have ceased when the Civil War no longer caused it to be the venue of the contending parties. And had it not been for the event which had occurred on April 23, 1564 (old style), when the Bard of Avon entered the world in the Henley Street house to which so many pilgrims flock each year, the claim of the town to special notice and description would be far less easily defined.

Obscure as many of the incidents of Shakespeare's early life unfortunately are, the connection of his family with Warwickshire and with Stratford are happily traceable with some considerable degree of certitude. Richard Shakespeare (the Christian name of whom is traditional, it must be admitted) is popularly supposed to have been the owner or tenant of some land and tenements at Snitterfield, a small village about four miles north of Stratford, situated on rising ground, which were granted to him for "his faithful and approved service to the most prudent prince, King Henry VII. of famous memory"; what these services were does not appear. Of his several children two at least were sons named John and Henry. The former, afterwards to be the father of the poet, was born about the year 1530, and was certainly a resident in Stratford prior to 1552. About the latter year he was following the trade of fell-monger (hide seller) and glover,

possibly also combining with these the trade of butcher, and it is ascertained that he at times also dealt in corn and timber. All of which trades he carried on in Henley Street. He appears to have prospered in his business, for in the month of October 1556 he is recorded as having purchased the copyhold of a house, garden, and some other property in Greenhill Street, not far from Henley Street. In the following year he was married to Mary Arden, the daughter of one Robert Arden, of Aston Cantlow, a village some six miles north-west of Stratford, who left her a small estate called Asbies, as well as reversionary rights in property at Snitterfield, including the farm which he had leased to Shakespeare's father. In the same year John Shakespeare became a member of the Stratford Corporation.

His house on the northern side of Henley Street was one of considerable size, and, indeed, in those days was doubtless esteemed a fine house. As was not inappropriate for the birthplace of one who loved and must have often rambled in the Forest of Arden, it was from thence that came the oak planks and beams of which the house was built,—timbers tough and well seasoned, fit to outlast a thousand years. It was here that to John and Mary Shakespeare was born a daughter, Joan, in 1558 (who, it is probable, died some two years later) ; another daughter, Margaret, in 1562 (who died when about four months old) ; and then in 1564 a son, William, destined to be the greatest of English poets and dramatists.

The exact date of his birth is, unfortunately, but conjectural. It is usually accepted as being April 23. But, as was the custom with the other children of John and Mary Shakespeare, only the dates of baptism are recorded. That in the case of William was April 26, and the date being old style brings it actually to May 5 in our present calendar. But there is a well-authenticated and continuous tradition that St. George's Day, April 23, was the actual date of the poet's birth ; and most authorities are agreed that in this case tradition is probably right. It must be remembered in this connection that in those days it was the custom to bring children to baptism as soon as possible after birth, and two or three days after was a very common time.

Shakespeare came into the world at a period when there was a perfect galaxy of prospective literary talent. Michael Drayton, born the previous year, was still an infant ; Walter Raleigh, Philip Sidney, and Edmund Spenser were boys ; and Francis Bacon, destined to provide so much material for Shakespearian controversy in later times, was a tiny child.

Indeed, the remembrance of Shakespeare's birth year was likely to remain in the public mind for some considerable period, for it was the year of the Great Frost, when the Thames froze almost solidly from side to side above London Bridge, and a fair of several weeks' duration was held upon it. Whilst in Stratford there was a recurrence of the plague, which is stated to have carried off at least one in seven of the total

population. Fortunately the house of John Shakespeare escaped the scourge.

In the following year Shakespeare's father was made an alderman of the borough, and in 1566 a son, Gilbert, was born to him. In 1568 the alderman became high-bailiff of the town; in the following year a daughter was born, who (in spite of the ill-fortune popularly supposed to follow such a thing as giving a child the name of a previous one who had died) was named Joan. In 1571 John Shakespeare became senior alderman of the town, which was the most exalted civic office the place could bestow, and entitled its possessor to the title of Magister, both after as well as during his term of office. It is by this title that he is at and from this date described in the Parish Registers. In the same year was born his daughter Anne, who was baptized on September 28; and two years afterwards a son, baptized Richard, was born.

In 1575 is recorded the purchase by John Shakespeare from one Edmund Hall of the house in Henley Street, now known as the birthplace, for the sum of £40. From this period the star of Shakespeare's father, which hitherto, except for quite trivial ups and downs of fortune, appears to have been so distinctly in the ascendant, waned. Three years later his embarrassment was such that he was compelled to mortgage Asbies, which his wife had brought him, and also to sell his interest in certain lands at Snitterfield.

He appears also to have ceased attending the meet-

ings of the Town Council, and even to have had his taxes remitted. In 1579 his daughter Anne died, and in the following year his name appears in several lists of recusants, which circumstance has been held by some to afford evidence of his having either been a Romanist or having become one. At this time the Roman Catholic religion was of course proscribed, and it has been thought by some that his troubles may possibly have arisen in part from his apostasy or belonging to the "old faith." There is, however, no clear evidence in support of this contention. In 1585 his affairs seem to have gone from bad to worse, for he was deprived of his office of alderman for non-attendance, the record reading "He doth not come to the halles, nor hath he of long time."

It was a few years later, however, that the crisis in his affairs seems to have been reached, for during this period we learn that he could not attend church for fear of "processe of debt." In 1597, on account of the success of his son (as some think), there was a distinct recovery in the position of the Shakespeares. And during the year a bill was filed by him in the Court of Chancery against John Lambert, the son of the man to whom his estate of Asbies had been mortgaged in 1578, the object of the action being for its recovery. The argument of John Shakespeare being that though money had been tendered for the release of the property the Lamberts still held it, and refused to resign possession. About the same time, too, a grant of arms was made to him by one Dethick, Garter

King-at-Arms. The motto afterwards used by the poet was "Non sanz droict."

In 1601 Shakespeare's father died, the fact being recorded in the burial register at Stratford as follows:—

1601, Sept. 8, Mr. Johanes Shakspeare.

Thus ends the record of a life which saw quite its fair share of vicissitudes.

Of Shakespeare's early life, unfortunately, comparatively little is known. It appears probable, however, that about the year 1571, when he was seven years old, he was sent to the Grammar School founded in 1481 by one Thomas Jolyffe. There is no reason for doubting that he was for some considerable time a scholar there, and learned the "small Latin and less Greek" which was assigned to him by Ben Jonson.

It was whilst he was still a schoolboy that Queen Elizabeth visited the Earl of Leicester at Kenilworth; and thither many from the districts round about flocked to gaze upon her Majesty, and to witness with open-eyed wonder the magnificent pageants which were enacted for her amusement. As Stratford is but thirteen miles distant from Kenilworth by road it appears more than possible that both Shakespeare and his father were amongst the spectators. If this were the case it is probable that the Kenilworth festivities were the first introduction which the future dramatist had to the stage, and that the influence of the scenes he must have witnessed becomes easily traceable in several of his plays.

ABBOTS SALFORD.

Shakespeare's Early Life

Every life of Shakespeare, even with the benefit of the latest discoveries and the most recent and learned reasoning and deductions, must unhappily be largely conjectural. Not because it is possible to believe that it was blank or useless in its earlier days, but because, alas! the records are so scanty that the most able and painstaking research has succeeded in eliciting from the past but a fragmentary chain of circumstances and comparatively unimportant facts where one would have had detailed evidence. Shakespeare's wedding with Anne Hathaway when he was nineteen and she seven years his senior, some time in the early part of the month of December 1582, was followed on May 26 of the succeeding year by the birth of his daughter Susannah. No evidence exists to settle the question of either Shakespeare's employment or mode of life during the early period of his married life, and the only indisputable fact that has come down to us relating to the next year or two is the record of the birth of twins, a son Hamnet and a daughter Judith, on February 2, 1585, who were baptized in Stratford Church.

It was about this time that Shakespeare went to London, though probably quite late in the year. The reason of his removal from his native town is quite unknown, although some authorities appear to favour the traditional story that it was in consequence of his poaching exploits, and the action of Sir Thomas Lucy. Others think that he was drawn thither by a desire to better his position, and thus provide for his increasing

family. Two years later, in 1587, he was found, according to Mr. Fleay, a member of the Earl of Leicester's players either at the time of or shortly after their visit to Stratford, when they probably gave performances in the Guild Hall. This is, however, entirely supposition, as there is neither any very definite tradition nor any recorded fact which proves Shakespeare to have left Stratford under these circumstances.

For several years after this date there is nothing to connect the poet with his native town, but in 1596 the Register at Stratford contains an entry recording the burial of his only son Hamnet, which took place on August 11. The following year the poet purchased from William Underhill, gentleman, "one messuage, two barns, two gardens, and two orchards, with appurtenances, in Stratford-on-Avon," for the sum of £60, the house being that erected by Sir Hugh Clopton in the reign of Henry VII., and known then as the Great House. Shakespeare renamed it New Place, and by this name the site (for the house has disappeared) is known to this day.

From this time onward the poet seems to have enjoyed very material prosperity, and became at various times the purchaser of other property in the town and neighbourhood.

In 1607 his elder daughter Susannah married one of the leading medical men of the town, Dr. John Hall, and in the following year a grand-daughter was born to the poet, named Elizabeth. His younger daughter Judith married in 1616 a vintner of Stratford named

Thomas Quiney. Of this marriage there were three children born, two of whom survived to attain manhood, but died without issue.

These somewhat bare facts unhappily constitute almost all that is known of Shakespeare and his family life. His death occurring on April 23, 1616, after an illness of some weeks.

Of the latter part of his life his first biographer, Rowe, writes, it "was spent, as all men of sense may wish theirs may be, in some retirement, and the conversation of his friends. His pleasurable wit and good nature engaged him in the acquaintance, and entitled him to the friendship of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood."

But, however meagre may be the details of the poet's life at Stratford and elsewhere, fortunately for pilgrims to his native town and admirers of his plays, there are still surviving the ravages of time and modern changes, so often destructive of these things, many buildings and spots directly or indirectly connected with him and incidents in his career.

The birthplace, situated in Henley Street, is of course the most interesting and important building in the eyes of Shakespearian "critics" and admirers alike. It is a half-timbered, two-storied building with dormer windows and a wooden porch, which although largely restored in 1857-58, may be considered to fairly represent the house as it stood at the time of the poet's birth, great care having been taken at the time of restoration to follow every indication discoverable of its former

state. Both the birthplace and the wool-shop adjoining were probably erected at the commencement of the sixteenth century, and at that period the house would have undoubtedly held rank as one of the better sort, and as forming a very comfortable residence for a tradesman in a small provincial town such as Stratford then was. But in those far-off Elizabethan days the environment of the house was very different from what it now is. We have already referred to the state of Stratford streets when rubbish and household refuse not only disfigured them, but made passage through them both difficult and unsavoury, and John Shakespeare would not seem to have been more particular than his neighbours, for we find that in April 1552 he was mulcted in the not then inconsiderable sum of twelvepence for cleaning away the rubbish which he had allowed to accumulate in front of his own door. The roadway was probably little more than a deeply rutted track, with a walnut tree, which was standing as late as 1765, in front of the entrance door, and under the shade of which doubtless Shakespeare's father, when his business was done, used to sit and gossip with his neighbours. Across the road was a pool of water (probably a duck pond), and at the rear of the house a garden and outbuildings.

After John Shakespeare's death, the dwelling probably remained in the occupation of his widow till her death in 1608, when it came into possession of Joan Hart, her sister. The poet himself left the house to her by will, and she lived in it until 1646. Shake-

speare's daughter Susannah Hall afterwards came into possession (having previously been the owner of the wool-shop), and from her it descended to her daughter Lady Barnard. Ultimately, after various owners and vicissitudes, the building was converted in 1784 into an open-fronted butcher's shop, the windows and porch being removed to allow of a proper display of the stock in trade. The wool-shop next door had long previously, in 1603, become an inn, called at first "The Maidenhead," and afterwards "The Swan and Maidenhead." Its front was faced with brickwork in 1808, and some forty years later the buildings were bought for the nation, and ten years afterwards were restored, as already mentioned.

The street entrance is directly into the chief living room of the house, which is stone paved, and provided with an old-fashioned recessed fireplace, as is also the kitchen. Behind the latter are two small apartments known as the wash-house and pantry. Beneath the kitchen is a small cellar reached by a flight of steps, and probably remaining much in its original state.

The principal room of the upper floor, facing the street, and reached by an oak staircase of ten steps, is the birth-room. The walls, ceiling, and windows are covered by numberless signatures, written and scratched upon them by "pilgrims" before the custom was strictly prohibited. Amongst this strange collection of autographs can still be deciphered many of interest, including those of Izaak Walton, Thomas Carlyle, Sir Walter Scott, and other famous people. The

bureau in the room was brought from the Old College, demolished in 1799, and the chairs were gifts. This by no means imposing chamber not only witnessed the birth of the poet, but in all likelihood those of his brothers and sisters, and was the death-chamber of his father, mother, and sister Susannah, Mrs. Hart. In a room at the back of this, originally forming two small bedrooms, is an oil painting presumed to be that of Shakespeare. It closely resembles the bust in the church, and was possibly copied from it. It was given to the house by Mr. W. O. Hunt, and is supposed to have originally belonged to the Clopton family, having been found in Edward Clopton's house on his death. Curiously enough, the face was formerly disguised with a beard, which a Mr. Collins, a connoisseur of some note, discovered was painted over the original picture. The portrait was, therefore, cleaned and repaired (the beard being removed in the process), and was afterwards deposited at the birthplace. The sign-boards in the room are old ones belonging to the house.

There is none of the original furniture in the house, it having long ago been sold, broken up, or otherwise disposed of. In Shakespeare's day the furniture of a house of this size and type must have been of a very simple character. It would have consisted of little beyond a substantial table, a press, chairs, a cupboard, and a tall clock, with the usual table utensils in the living room ; and a four-post wooden bedstead, a chair or two, and a table or washstand in the bedrooms.

The floors were carpetless, though those of the living room and kitchen might be strewn with rushes.

The Museum occupies the portion of the building used by John Shakespeare as a store and shop. It contains a large number of Shakespearian and other relics, concerning the authenticity of some of which there must be grave doubt. Amongst the most interesting in the lower part of the Museum is the desk which Shakespeare is traditionally supposed to have used when a lad at the Grammar School, from whence it was removed to the Museum some years back.

In the central case of relics are a ring with his initials, W.S., entwined on the setting; and a sword supposed to have belonged to him. The glass jug from which David Garrick drank at the Jubilee in 1769, and the inn sign of the Falcon Tavern at Bidford, are also preserved in this part of the Museum; with a considerable number of deeds relating to property acquired by various members of the Shakespeare family, or bearing their signatures as witnesses thereto. Of the books none are of particular note, although amongst them are several copies of early editions of the poet's plays.

The garden in the rear of the house is of considerable beauty and interest from the fact that it is largely stocked with specimens of the trees, fruits, and flowers mentioned by Shakespeare in his various plays. In the centre now reposes the remains of the ancient Market Cross of Stratford, dating from the fourteenth century.

In the angle formed by Chapel Street and Chapel

Lane, beyond the Town Hall and past the well-known Shakespeare Hotel, is a group of houses of considerable interest situated upon the left-hand side of the street. The first is known as Hathaway's house, and was the residence in 1647 of a descendant of the family of Shakespeare's wife, named Thomas Hathaway. Next door but one is Nash's house, once the property of Thomas Nash, who married Elizabeth Hall, the poet's grand-daughter; on her death it came again into the possession of the Nash family, and was one of the buildings purchased with New Place in 1861. The front of the house has been several times restored since Shakespeare's day, and the interior has been greatly modernised, but a part of the back and the beams of the chimney are without doubt portions of the original building. The house is now a Museum, containing several items of distinct interest, amongst which are some chairs formerly at New Place, and a fine photographic copy of the proof impression of the Droeshout portrait of Shakespeare engraved in 1623. The house of Shaw, an intimate friend of the poet's, and one of the witnesses to his will, is next door to the Museum, between it and the Hathaways' house.

Only the site, and garden, and a few traces of the foundations of New Place, Shakespeare's home in his latter years, remain. Nothing of the mansion originally erected for Sir Hugh Clopton has been left standing. The fact that it was probably the most imposing residence in the town in Shakespeare's time affords interesting evidence of the prosperity which

BIDFORD BRIDGE.

undoubtedly came to him from his companies of players and the performance of his plays. On acquiring the property of New Place, Shakespeare made considerable alterations to fit it to his requirements and ideas ; the house at this time having two gardens attached to it, one small and one larger. It is probable that the famous mulberry tree, which was in all likelihood one of a considerable number distributed through the Eastern Counties and Midlands by a Frenchman of the name of Verton or Verdon in 1609, was planted by the poet in the smaller garden. Of the great garden Shakespeare made an orchard, and in it there is some evidence that he passed much of his time. Prior to the year 1609 the house was occupied by one Thomas Greene, Town Clerk of Stratford, who claimed cousinship with the poet ; and after the latter's death in 1616 the property descended to his married daughter, Mrs. Hall, and here in 1643 she entertained Henrietta Maria, consort of Charles I.

After passing through several hands the house and property came into the possession in 1753 of the Rev. Francis Gastrell, Vicar of Frodsham, in Cheshire. This event afterwards proved to be fraught with disastrous consequences, for the Vicar, cursed with a violent and selfish disposition, soon began a work of destruction upon the Shakespearian relics, which unhappily for posterity he had acquired. Angered by the frequency with which travellers, admirers of the poet, and antiquarian students applied to him for permission to view the celebrated mulberry tree, in the

shade of which Sir Hugh Clopton in 1742 is by tradition stated to have entertained David Garrick, Dr. Delany, and Macklin, he proceeded to cut it down. This was in itself an act of vandalism which would have earned for him an unenviable notoriety for all time; but far worse was to follow. It appears that during a portion of each year Gastrell was obliged to be absent, ministering to his flock at Frodsham. The Stratford local authorities were (from his point of view) unreasonable enough to expect him to pay his rates all the same. Resenting their action and to show his anger he promptly had New Place demolished, and the materials of which it was constructed sold! Thus vanished for ever, in the act of a maniacal priest, a building only second in interest and archæological value to the birthplace itself, leaving but the site and a few traces of the foundations remaining.

In addition to the Shakespearian dwellings we have described, there are a considerable number of domestic buildings and fragments in Stratford of interest as architectural survivals, but with which there is no space to deal here. The curious and the serious student of Shakespeare's town will have little difficulty and much pleasure in discovering them.

Exactly opposite New Place, on the other side of Chapel Lane, are the old Guild Hall and Guild Chapel. The latter anciently the Chapel of the Guild of the Holy Cross. This organisation, like some of those of Coventry and other places, was partly religious and partly secular in character. Although it was certainly

in existence in the reign of Edward I. the actual date of its foundation is unknown. The ancient governing body of the Guild consisted of two aldermen and six Councillors, who were fined fourpence if they failed to attend its meetings. The annual subscription in 1389 was sixpence, and admission to the Guild was made upon payment of an entrance fee, which varied in amount according to whether the applicant was married or single. There were social feasts at various times during the year, more especially at Easter-tide, and the existing records of these form a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the habits and manners of those far distant times.

That Stratford could not in those early days have been a place of great resource or importance is made clear by the fact that it was necessary to obtain supplies for these Guild festivities from outside, and keep the live stock, pigs, fowls, sheep, goats, etc. alive in charge of the Guild until required.

By the middle of the thirteenth century the Guild had prospered to such a degree that in 1269 it obtained a license from the then Bishop of Worcester to build a chapel and hospital. The present Guild Chapel is the one erected during the earlier part of the fifteenth century, on the site of the original building. The nave was rebuilt in 1292, in Henry VII.'s reign, by Sir Hugh Clopton. On the exterior of the porch are four shields bearing the arms of Sir Hugh Clopton, those of the city of London (of which he was Lord Mayor), those of the merchants of the Woolstaple, and

the remaining shield bearing what are thought to be the original arms of Stratford. Early in the nineteenth century a series of frescoes were discovered in the chapel, which were promptly whitewashed over or otherwise destroyed; fortunately, however, not before one Thomas Fisher had made a series of drawings, which in some measure permits us to realise the character of the pictures; the subjects were "The Doom," "The History of the Holy Cross," "The Combat between St. George and the Dragon," and "The Martyrdom of St. Thomas of Canterbury." A fragment of a fresco (a figure with mutilated legs bearing a shield) is discernible on the west of the arch of the inner door.

With this building Shakespeare must have been well acquainted when a boy, and also as a man. Whilst resident at New Place he, in all probability, attended it, as there was a pew attached to the property. Not only is this small building interesting as a survival of a bygone age, but as intimately connected with at least two portions of Shakespeare's life—boyhood, and his later years of residence in the town of his birth.

Another building of great and enduring interest is the Guild Hall, an ancient, half-timbered structure standing on the south side of the chapel, and built in 1296 by Robert de Stratford, but greatly altered during the fifteenth century. It was erected for the use of the members of the Guild, and after the dissolution of that body it was granted by Edward VI. in 1553 to the principal inhabitants, and was later on used

for the purposes of a Town Hall, until the present one was erected in 1768 on the site of a previous building. In 1890, at the south end, underneath the wainscot, some traces of frescoes were discovered in the plaster panels. The centre one contains a representation of the Crucifixion, with the Virgin on one side and a figure (probably St. John) on the other. In the other panels are coats of arms. It was in this hall that Shakespeare most probably first became acquainted with "stage plays" and players, and not, as some suppose, at Kenilworth, for it was here that travelling companies, invited by the bailiff and aldermen of the town, used to give performances. The first of these of which a record exists visited the town in 1569; subsequently the companies of the Earls of Leicester, Worcester, and Warwick all gave performances at Stratford; that of the first named in 1587, the year in which Shakespeare is supposed to have gone to London in their company.

The windows looking out into the street are comparatively modern, those originally lighting the room being on the opposite side, and at the south end, which latter window is now blocked up. In the lower part of the wall are holes, in which the beams supporting the dais or stage on which the plays were performed were placed. The Armoury, or "greeing-room," which is reached from the hall, has good panelling of the Jacobean period, and the Royal arms over the fireplace were set up in 1660 as a memento of the public rejoicing which followed the Restoration. The Muni-

ment Room, reached by a winding staircase, is a small chamber, in which a large number of interesting documents of the sixteenth century were discovered some years ago. Above the armoury is the Council Chamber, an interesting room now used as the school library. In it is a massive oak table dating from Jacobean times.

The famous Grammar School, founded in Henry VI.'s reign by Thomas Jolyffe, a priest who was a native of Stratford, is above the Guild Hall. As was the case with so many other institutions of a like character, the dissolution of the Monasteries and Foundations saw its funds "appropriated" by the Crown, and this remained the case until the accession of Edward VI., who in 1553 granted a Charter of Incorporation to the principal inhabitants, and with it restored the property formerly belonging to the Guild. The mathematical room and the Latin room are both immediately above the Guild Hall, and in both there are high open-timbered roofs, with remarkably stout tie-beams. It was at the lower end of the Latin room that Shakespeare's traditional desk used to stand, which was formerly the second master's desk. Aubrey states that the poet was for a short period a schoolmaster in the country, and, if this is correct, it is, of course, quite possible that he filled the office of junior master at the Grammar School, and used the desk associated by tradition with him.

The almshouses, which were formerly for twenty-four poor members of the Guild, and nowadays have twelve

male and twelve female inmates, adjoin the school—a row of picturesque half-timbered houses.

Close to the river and not far from the Memorial Theatre stands Stratford Church of the Holy Trinity, ideally situated, almost embosomed in trees, and approached on the north side by a beautiful avenue of limes. The building, which was a Collegiate Church from the reign of Edward III. to the Dissolution, is a cruciform edifice consisting of a nave with aisles, a chancel, transepts, and a central tower with an elegant octagonal spire, which seems to dominate the whole town when viewed from a little distance. The building is of mixed styles of architecture, the oldest portions of which are the Early English tower (the present spire was erected in 1764, replacing the ancient wooden one); nave of the same period, though possessing a Decorated clerestory; and the north aisle, built about the beginning of the thirteenth century. The transepts, which were very considerably restored in the reign of Henry VII. by the executors of Sir Hugh Clopton, probably date from the beginning of the thirteenth century.

The Decorated south aisle was erected in 1332 by John de Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury, and he it was who founded at its east end a chapel dedicated to Sir Thomas of Canterbury.

The chancel is Perpendicular, and was built by Dr. Thomas Balshall at the end of the fifteenth century. The north porch is Perpendicular, and the clerestory of the nave was erected late in the fifteenth century,

replacing an earlier one of about the same period as the arcade.

The north aisle had a chapel at its eastern end, called formerly the Chapel of Our Lady the Virgin, but now commonly known as the Clopton Chapel, on account of the number of tombs belonging to that family which it contains.

The great point of interest, of course, is the monument of Shakespeare, which is on the north wall of the chancel, and consists of a bust of the poet under an arch, on either side of which are two Corinthian columns of black marble supporting an entablature bearing his arms, with a seated cherub on either side, and a skull crowning the top. On a panel beneath the bust, which was made by Gerard Johnson, a tomb-maker, who lived near the church now known as St. Saviour's, Southwark, and was erected prior to 1623, are the following inscriptions :—

> Judicio Pylium, Genio Socratem, Arte Maronem,
> Terra Tegit, Populus Moeret, Olympus Habet.
>
> Stay, passenger, why goest thou so fast?
> Read, if thou canst, whom envious Death hath plast
> Within this monument; Shakespeare, with whome
> Quicke Natur dide; whose name doth deck ys tombe,
> Far more than cost; sith all yt he hath writt,
> Leaves living art, but page to serve his witt.
>
> Obit Ano Doi 1616.
> Aetatis 53 Die 23 A.P.

Originally the bust was coloured, but at the end of the eighteenth century it was given a coat of white

CHARLECOTE.

paint, which remained on for nearly seventy years, when on its removal in 1861 sufficient traces of the original colouring were discovered to permit of restoration.

It is generally assumed that the face of this bust was modelled from a death mask, possibly even from the cast which is now at Darmstadt; and although either the execution was originally poor or the likeness has been spoiled by restoration, the monument is, of course, of the greatest interest to all admirers of the poet, and to those who are students of his life and works. It is believed that the memorial was provided by Dr. Hall and his wife, and at all events there seems little doubt that they superintended its erection.

Close beneath the monument and within the altar rails is the poet's grave, with the well-known lines :—

GOOD FREND FOR JESUS SAKE FORBEARE
TO DIGG THE DUST ENCLOASED HEARE;
BLESTE BE Y^e MAN Y^t SPARES THES STONES;
AND CVRST BE HE Y^e MOVES^s MY BONES.

It is supposed that these lines were written by Shakespeare himself, fearful lest his remains might be disturbed; for anciently, on the north side of the chancel, was a charnel-house in which were a large collection of human bones. This was done away with in 1800.

Next to the north wall, on the left of the poet's grave, is that of his wife, who died on August 6, 1623; a Latin inscription on a small brass plate marking the spot. Close by are also buried Thomas Nash, the first husband of Elizabeth Hall, Shakespeare's grand-

daughter, who died in 1647; Dr. John Hall, who died in 1635; and Susannah Hall, Shakespeare's daughter, who died in 1649. The original lines on the grave of the latter were obliterated some time at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and an inscription to some one else put in their place. The lines were, however, restored in 1836.

> Witty above her sexe, but that's not all,
> Wise to salvation was good Mistris Hall.
> Something of Shakespeare was not that but this
> Wholy of him with whom she's now in blisse.
> Then, passenger, ha'st ne're a teare
> To weepe with her that wept with all?
> That wept, yet set her selfe to chere
> Them up with comforts cordiall.
> Her love shall live, her mercy spread,
> When thou ha'st ne're a teare to shed.

The stained glass in the east window dates from 1895. The "American" window, presented in 1885, is situated on the north side of the chancel, the subject of which is "The Seven Ages of Man." The choir stalls are very handsomely carved, and contain grotesques on their misereres. The fine stained-glass window unveiled in 1896 by Mr. Bayard, the then American ambassador to this country, is another gift of admirers of the poet in the United States. The chancel screen, which now occupies a position across the chancel archway, was originally in the nave, and the former screen is placed in the north transept and forms the vestry.

In the Clopton Chapel are to be found a number of excellent memorials of the family, one of the finest being

one against the wall of George Carew, Earl of Totnes, and Baron Clopton and Joyce his wife. The effigies of the Earl and Countess, which are of coloured alabaster, lie under an arch supported by Corinthian columns. The Earl is in armour, and the weapons and other warlike objects represented on the tomb commemorate the fact that he was the Master of Ordnance of James I. The High Tomb, which is without effigy or inscription, has numerous panels formerly adorned with "latten" shields. It was thought that this tomb was intended for Sir Hugh Clopton, Lord Mayor of London in 1492, from the fact that he left directions that if he died at Stratford he was to be buried there. He was, however, buried in St. Margaret's, Lothbury.

Another interesting memorial placed against the north wall is that of William Clopton and his wife Ann. The recumbent effigies are respectively in armour and in a low-bodiced robe. William Clopton has his head resting upon his helmet, whilst on the head of his wife is a close-fitting hood with a peaked front. The tomb also has upon it effigies of their children, some of whom are depicted as in swaddling bands, indicating that they must have died in infancy.

Amongst the other objects of universal interest in this fine church are the old font, in which Shakespeare is supposed to have been baptized; and the ancient register of the church, wisely protected by a glass case placed at the western end of the north aisle, containing the entries of Shakespeare's baptism and burial, and many other records of interest.

The Shakespeare Memorial buildings, which stand adjoining the Bancroft Gardens at the foot of Chapel Lane by the river, form an imposing and fairly picturesque pile in the Elizabethan style of architecture; but which, frankly, to most people must in its newness appear somewhat out of character with the general atmosphere of the old town. The buildings contain a Library; Theatre, capable of seating nearly 900 persons; a Picture Gallery; and Central Tower. The idea of a national memorial to the nation's poet had been several times brought forward prior to the autumn of 1874, when Mr. Charles E. Flower presented the fine site on which the Memorial stands, and the sum of £1000, coupled with the suggestion that the Memorial should take the form of a Theatre. A committee was formed, and the first stone was laid on Shakespeare's Day, April 23, 1877. The Theatre portion was opened on the same day two years later, and the whole building was completed in 1883. Many years before, David Garrick had made the suggestion that a "school for actors" should be founded at Stratford, but this idea—with several others mooted at various times—was never proceeded with.

In the Library, which is on the ground floor, are more than 10,000 volumes relating to Shakespeare, his works and times; a collection alike valuable to the student of the poet and to those who would seek to know what were the modes of life and manners of the Elizabethan age. The Picture Gallery contains some interesting portraits of famous actors and actresses, a

copy of the Davenant bust of the poet, and a portrait of Shakespeare, from which some authorities claim that the Droeshout engraving was made. Whether this latter supposition is correct or not is still in dispute; and, indeed, around the whole question of its authenticity has raged a fierce battle, in which many artists and antiquarians of note have at various times taken part. The portrait is on an elm panel, and bears date 1609. The most interesting point is what became of the portrait from which Droeshout engraved his? For many years it had been untraceable, but some few years ago the picture in question was presented to the Memorial by Mrs. Flower. Such well-known authorities as Mr. Sidney Lee and Mr. Salt Brassington are inclined, for reasons into which it is impossible to enter here, to accept the portrait as that from which Droeshout engraved his, with which Shakespeare's friend Ben Jonson would appear to have been satisfied as being a good representation of his dead friend. If authentic, it is unnecessary to add that it forms the most important relic of Shakespeare we have.

Of the many other pictures in the Gallery, the several portraits of Garrick by Reynolds, Pine, and others; the one of John Kemble by Sir Thomas Lawrence; Bell's fine picture of Miss Ada Rehan as Katharina in "The Taming of the Shrew," and subject pictures by Reynolds, Nomney, Opie, Smirke, and others claim especial notice.

In the Theatre, the drop curtain of which—an interesting one by Beverley—illustrates Queen Elizabeth

going in state to the opening of the Globe Theatre, are given annually during the week in which Shakespeare's birthday comes representations of various of his plays The building is also occasionally used by travelling dramatic companies.

In the Bancroft Gardens stands the statue and monument sculptured by Lord Ronald Gower, and presented by him, around the base of which are excellent figures of Prince Henry, Hamlet, Falstaff, and Lady Macbeth.

Linking the past with the present age of letters is the fact that in the fine old house in Church Street, called Mason's Croft, resides Miss Marie Corelli, the writer and novelist, whose interest in the preservation of old buildings in Stratford and Shakespearian survivals is well known.

After the birthplace and perhaps Holy Trinity Church, there is no spot connected with Shakespeare so visited as Anne Hathaway's traditional home at Shottery, distant about a mile from Stratford, just off the Alcester Road. Unhappily there is no satisfactory proof that the house was ever tenanted by Anne Hathaway's parents, or that Anne herself was at Shottery at all. All that is certain is that the picturesque, half-timbered, and thatched dwelling to which so many pilgrims yearly journey was, about Shakespeare's time, tenanted by one Richard Hathaway, who was the head of one of the three families of the same surname resident in the district. On his death his property was divided, and in bequeathing certain

sums of money to his children he mentioned three daughters by name, of whom an Agnes was one. This name was at that period often the equivalent of Anne. In his will one Thomas Whittington, a shepherd of Stratford, is mentioned as a creditor, and later on in Whittington's will appears a bequest to the poor of the town of Stratford of eleven shillings lying "in the hand of Anne Shaxpere, wyfe unto Mr. Wyllyam Shaxpere, and is due debt unto me." The witnesses of the poet's marriage bond also appear in Richard Hathaway's will, one as witness and the other as supervisor. These facts, although, it must be admitted, by no means proving that Anne Hathaway was the daughter of the occupier of the cottage, formerly a considerable farm-house, are certainly evidence of some weight in favour of the tradition. The property was acquired by the trustees of the birthplace in 1892, and this fact has, of course, conferred a certain imprimatur of authenticity upon the building.

Much more of interest might be written of this fascinating town which, although the resort of so many thousands from all parts of the world almost the year through, yet seems without effort to preserve an atmosphere even in these modern times not altogether out of keeping with the bygone age in which its most famous son lived. To whatever cause, whether commercial or otherwise, this lingering savour of romance and of past times is due, those who value antiquities, and who revel in memorials of the days gone by, may be unfeignedly grateful.

CHAPTER XII

A GROUP OF SHAKESPEARE'S VILLAGES

AROUND Stratford lie grouped quite a number of villages which Shakespeare undoubtedly knew and visited, and possibly described in one or other of his plays and poems. Great as is the attraction of Stratford itself to many, there will be also pleasurable interests found in the old-world villages which lie within easy distance. In them and about them, indeed, there still lingers much of the "atmosphere" of Shakespearian times, and in travelling to them along winding roads and leafy by-ways one breathes the wider air of the Feldon and Arden, and from the summits of their little hills can catch glimpses of the district which Speed, not altogether unwarrantably, referred to as another Eden. In the fields still toil peasants little differing, in the more retired spots, in mode of life from those who toiled in Shakespeare's days, gathering the harvest of peas in autumn, or sowing them in spring. Some, of course, who garner the peas are merely birds of passage, wayside toilers, here to-day and gone to-morrow ; but many others are natives of the place or

RUGBY SCHOOL.

neighbourhood in which they dwell, speaking with much the same voices and phraseology as the peasants of Shakespeare's time.

Through sweet Warwickshire lanes and by-paths one may reach many a retired village well worth seeing, and wander, as Shakespeare wandered, into places which he undoubtedly knew. In spring and summer few counties can show a richer wealth of wayside flowers, or a greater glory of leaf and bud; and the autumn is not less lovely. If only for the beauty of the lanes and the by-ways many will feel rewarded in making a pilgrimage to some of the spots which we shall briefly describe.

Some six miles north-west of Stratford, close to the banks of the picturesque little River Alne, lies Aston Cantlow, anciently known as Estone Cantilupe. The first portion of the old name having probably a reference to its position as regards Alcester, from which it is distant five miles; and the latter part being derived from William de Cantelu, or Cantilupe, a man of considerable power and influence in the reign of King John, from whom he obtained a charter for the holding of a market and a yearly fair.

The family of Cantilupe appears to have possessed the manor for rather more than half a century, from 1205 to 1272.

The village is a very pretty one, and has additional interest in its fine church, dating principally from the end of the thirteenth century. Originally the family of Cantilupe erected or possessed a castle here, some

traces of the earthworks of which are still to be seen close to the River Alne, on the north side of the church. The ancient moat is quite clearly traceable, and this at flood-tide is filled by the overflow of the river.

There is a fine half-timbered house in the village (now, alas! split up into small tenements), which was formerly the hall of the "Guild of the Blessed Virgin." The church itself consists of chancel, nave, north aisle and chapel, and a south porch, and it has at the western end an embattled tower with pinnacles. The roof, which is probably the original one, is cradle pattern, with the rafters trussed with curved braces. There is a somewhat elementary but very interesting stone carving over the north door of the nave, depicting the Virgin Mary in bed with the infant Christ, whilst St. Joseph stands at the foot. The date of this work it is difficult to fix absolutely, but it seems probable that it dates from the beginning of the fourteenth century. The western end of the north aisle contains an uncommon newel staircase, originally intended to serve as a means of communication between the church and some upper parvise or chamber; but this apartment can never have been completed, as the stairs lead nowhere. In the chancel are an interesting triple sedilia, a piscina, and a credence table, all connected together by means of a moulding, which terminates in two carved heads. The church also contains a fifteenth century octagonal font, placed on a short shaft, each face of which is ornamented by a sunk panel em-

bellished with a quatrefoil placed in a circle, and having a rose in the centre. At the east end of the church is the chantry chapel of the "Guild of the Blessed Virgin," in which are two old-fashioned open pews, noticeable for the carved poppy heads which adorn the elbows.

In the chapel are also an ancient *prie-Dieu*, and two old wooden candelabra, each having five receptacles, and pedestals of carved foliated work. It is probable that these formerly did service as "elevation" candlesticks, and were placed on the lower steps of the altar, to be lighted at high festivals and during the elevation of the Host.

Most of the woodwork of the church dates from the fifteenth century, and is well worth examination. To the Shakespearian students the building, of course, has an added interest from the fact that it seems very probable that it was here John, Shakespeare's father, was married to Mary Arden in 1557. Of the eight villages referred to in the rhyme traditionally ascribed (but apparently without foundation) to Shakespeare, which runs as follows—

> Piping Pebworth, Dancing Marston,
> Haunted Hillborough, Hungry Grafton,
> Dodging Exhall, Papist Wixford,
> Beggarly Broom, and Drunken Bidford—

two, Pebworth and Dancing Marston, are over the borders in Gloucestershire, and scarcely call for detailed mention here.

Temple Grafton, the "Hungry" Grafton of the

rhyme, lies about five miles south of Aston Cantlow. The village which is prettily situated on elevated ground was, in the reign of Henry I., bestowed by Henry de Grafton on the Knights Hospitallers, who afterwards gave a portion of it to Simon de Arden. It bore the name of Grafton until the reign of Henry VIII., and it is supposed that the word Grafton is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *graef*, a moat or ditch, the word "Hungry" being an epithet given it by reason of the poverty of the soil.

Billesley, a little village lying nearly midway between Stratford and Alcester, is the third competitor for notoriety as the place where the poet was married. The evidence in favour of Billesley is entirely traditional, and may be dismissed, but there is one interesting fact in connection with the place, *i.e.* that in 1639 Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Hall (Shakespeare's son-in-law and daughter), was married to Mr., afterwards Sir John, Barnard.

The manor-house at Billesley, comprising the south wing of the original Elizabethan building, contains a room, the oak panelling of which is said to have been brought from New Place. This chamber, which is known as Shakespeare's Room, is traditionally supposed to have been occupied by the poet on the occasion of his visits to the house.

Hillborough lies close to the river, some four miles from Stratford, down a by-road running almost due south from the main road. It is the "Haunted" Hillborough of the rhyme, although the origin of the

ghostly prefix is lost in obscurity. It is a picturesque stone-gabled building, beautifully trellised with ivy, which has lost one of its original wings. Apparently the house dates from Tudor times, but bears traces of several later additions and alterations. The interior contains an interesting survival in the shape of ascham or locker for bows and arrows in the corner of one of the oak-panelled rooms.

Hillborough seems chiefly noted nowadays for its profusion of fruit, the trees in the garden bearing such heavy crops as to necessitate their being propped in order to sustain them ; whilst peaches and even grapes ripen and come to maturity on the sunny south walls as they do in few places in the county.

Travelling westward, about three-quarters of a mile outside Bidford one comes to a small red-brick barn in a field on the right-hand side of the roadway. About fifty yards farther, on the opposite side, near by an iron gate, stands a young crab-apple tree, which, tradition asserts, sprang from the ancient one known as "Shakespeare's Crab Tree," under which the poet is reputed to have slumbered off the effects of a drinking bout in which he had taken part at Bidford. The old tree, however, stood farther in the field. It long ago disappeared, and it is even doubtful, alas! whether the young tree is, after all, related in any way to it.

From this point there is a magnificent view of the Worcestershire hills, and also Ragley Hall, set deeply amid the surrounding woods. Bidford, one of the

most picturesque and charming old-world villages in Warwickshire, is now speedily reached along the descending road. There is little doubt that this village, noticeable for its picturesque and old tiled houses—many of them creeper-grown and quaintly irregular as regards their architecture—is a place of great antiquity, as it is situated at the point where the ancient Icknield Street crosses the River Avon.

Although but a small village nowadays formerly it was a market town, the lordship of which was anciently given by King John to Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, on the marriage of the latter to his daughter Joan. The market was granted by Henry III. in 1220, and was still existent in the reign of Elizabeth.

Bidford seems to have derived its somewhat unpleasant appellation of "drunken" from the traditional tale which was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in December 1794; wherein it was said that formerly the village contained an Association or Club of Topers, who took pride in the quantity of ale they could swallow without falling under the table. These persons, tradition states, were in the habit of challenging the residents in neighbouring places to a contest of endurance, and those of Stratford-on-Avon were on one occasion so invited to a trial of strength.

The story further states that Shakespeare was one of the party who came over from Stratford, and with the rest of his companions was speedily conquered and had to leave the scene of action. It was whilst on the road home after the contest that Shakespeare and his

fellow-townsmen are stated to have laid themselves down in a drunken state under the crab-apple tree.

However true or otherwise the story may be, certain it is that Bidford in ancient times possessed a somewhat unenviable notoriety for festivity and drunkenness.

In the reign of Edward I. the lordship of Bidford was purchased by Robert Burnell, who, in addition to being Lord Treasurer and Lord Chancellor of England, was also Bishop of Bath and Wells. It was he who built the castle of Acton Burnell, Shropshire, at which the first Parliament was held. In the reign of Henry VII. Bidford was the property of Lord Lovell, which on his attainder escheated to the Crown, Henry VIII. subsequently granting it to Gerard Danet.

Nowadays Bidford is chiefly distinguished as a resort of Shakespearian pilgrims and excursionists. Its chief attractions are a fine and picturesque old bridge spanning the Avon, built at the end of the fifteenth century by the monks of Alcester to replace the existing ford.

The Church of St. Laurence, which is built on a slight knoll overlooking the river almost at the Stratford end of the village, possesses a tower of a most unusual type, the date of which it is very difficult to fix. The church consists of a chancel, nave, and aisles ; the first named is Early English, but the nave and aisles were rebuilt in 1835 in a very unfortunate and commonplace style. The windows of the chancel are filled by rather good stained glass, some of it by Capronnier of

Brussels. Whatever failings the restored building may have, the church plate is of undoubted interest. Probably of Spanish workmanship, it is of silver gilt repoussé work, and was presented by the Duchess of Dudley in 1665. The church chest, probably dating from the sixteenth century, is of an unusual kind, possessing heavy bands and hinges with three locks, and in the middle of each end a ring, such as is frequently found in old sea-chests.

Quite close to the church is an interesting old Elizabethan house, known as the Falcon Inn, built of stone, the gabled front containing three stories, and the principal windows mullioned. Formerly there was a picturesque projecting gallery, which was done away with many years ago. It was at this same inn that tradition states two fraternities known as the "Topers" and "Sippers" used to meet, and here it is alleged Shakespeare was frequently found carousing with his companions. Unfortunately the building is now divided up into tenements. It was from here that the inn sign and chair—now located in the birthplace—came.

Wixford Church is small and picturesque, and of mixed architecture. One of the most pleasing portions of the building is the chantry chapel of the fifteenth century, which possesses a very fine Tudor arched window of five lights on the east, and three good windows of the same kind on the south. In this beautiful chapel is a remarkably large and handsome tomb of Thomas de Cruwe and his wife Juliana, who died at the

commencement of the fifteenth century. The figures are of finely engraved brass under crocketed pedimental canopies, enclosed and divided by slender buttresses. Thomas de Cruwe is attired in armour, and his wife wears a coif with a veil depending to the shoulders, a close-fitting gown bound in with a cord at the waist, and a long mantle open in front. Above the canopies are fixed shields of arms, and the badge of a human foot is seen both above and below the figures.

This Thomas de Cruwe was attorney to Margaret de Beauchamp, and steward to Richard de Beauchamp.

The step to the chantry altar still remains, and on the south side of it is an extremely interesting piscina, with a semi-octagon canopy within a ogee double-pointed arch. There are also several early brasses in the church of considerable interest.

In the churchyard itself is the base of a fine old fourteenth-century cross, with three steps ; the centre-piece was found buried at the foot some years ago, and has a representation of the crucifixion on one side, and the Virgin and Child on the other.

North-west some eight miles from Stratford is the small market town of Henley-in-Arden, less retired and quiet, unhappily, nowadays than a few years ago. Anciently one of the towns situated in the great Forest of Arden, it still possesses a market cross, dating from the fifteenth century. And although the church, unlike many churches of Warwickshire villages, does not possess any features of special interest, within a quarter of a mile from the town lies Beaudesert, well

worth a visit. The first thing which will strike the traveller on approaching the spot are the earthworks, now known as the "Mound," where, in the twelfth century, Thurstan de Montfort erected a castle which was destroyed during the Wars of the Roses. From the Mound is obtained one of the finest views in Warwickshire, ranging from Edge Hill on the one hand to the Cotswolds on the other, with the charming picture of Henley itself in the near foreground. The earthworks are divided into three parts by two cross ditches; the portion farthest away from the village with the steepest sides was most probably the site of the keep.

The little Church of Beaudesert, probably built by De Montfort, and originally the Castle Church, lies at the foot of the earthworks. Although the church has been considerably restored it still contains much Norman work; particularly is this noticeable in the eastern window, which is ornamented with zigzag, star and indented mouldings. The chancel arch is also a fine specimen of Norman work, recessed and ornamented with wave and tooth mouldings. The tower dates only from the fifteenth century, but the walls and nave of the chancel are Norman, with some fourteenth-century windows inserted. There is an interesting holy water stoup on the east side of the south door, of about the same period as the doorway itself; and in the north wall are two small splayed Norman windows, the wall itself being of the thickness of five feet.

In the whole of Warwickshire there is scarcely more

beautiful scenery to be found than in the immediate neighbourhood of Henley-in-Arden. Here are still some few scattered remnants left of the great forest which once covered the district so thickly, but which was gradually cut down to meet the necessities of the iron furnaces of Aston, Birmingham, and other places. Indeed, the destruction of the Forest of Arden may be considered as having been brought about almost entirely by the means we have indicated. Here, too, may be found, often hidden away in by-lanes, picturesque survivals of the thatched and half-timbered cottages, which are, alas! now disappearing one by one to make room for modern erections, the ugliness of whose architecture is too often a blot on their surroundings.

Only about a mile and a half from Stratford itself is Clopton House, once the manor-house of the Clopton family, whose name is so closely identified with Stratford, and to whom the manor was granted in the thirteenth century. Most of the present house was built in the latter part of the fifteenth century, in the reign of Henry VII.; but it has been much altered at various periods, chiefly when the south and eastern portions were reconstructed by Sir Edward Walker about 1665, in the reign of Charles II. The house has also been restored in recent times. There is a good Jacobean oak staircase, and in the bay-window of the dining-room are the shields of several of the Cloptons.

In the attic story is a room used by the Roman Catholics as a chapel in the times succeeding the Refor-

mation, when such worship was a penal offence. On the walls are still decipherable Scriptural texts in black letter. A licence was granted by Pope Sixtus IV. to John Clopton and his heirs at the end of the fourteenth century, to enable them to have Mass said in this private chapel, opposite which is the Priests' Chamber.

The house has additional historical interest as the residence, in 1605, of Ambrose Rokewood, one of the chief conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot, and from the fact that it was here Catesby, Winter, the Wrights, and others used to assemble. After the failure of the plot Clopton was raided by the bailiff of Stratford, and amongst other things, consisting of papers, etc., was seized a bag containing "copes, vestments, crosses, crucifixes, chalices, and other massing reliques," belonging to the then tenant, a full inventory of which is deposited in the Museum at Stratford.

In the grounds are several small ponds, and beyond them a spring, now arched over, where Margaret Clopton is stated to have drowned herself in 1588, as a result of a love affair. It is supposed that this incident suggested to Shakespeare's mind the death of Ophelia, and there seems some considerable probability that the second scene of the introduction of "The Taming of the Shrew" is represented as taking place at Clopton House.

About four miles from Stratford, along the Kineton Road, lies Charlecote, in a picturesque park prettily situated close to the junction of the Wellesbourne brook with the Avon. It was here, of course, that the

somewhat apocryphal deer-stealing exploits of Shakespeare are said to have taken place. Whether there is any foundation in fact or not for the tradition, it seems certain that there was some considerable amount of friction at one time existing between the then owner, Sir Thomas Lucy, and the poet. But whether, as has been suggested by some, this circumstance had its rise in a difference of religion, or from some other cause, it has never been possible to determine. It is supposed by some that at the actual time the deer-stealing is stated to have taken place there were none at Charlecote, although there were in the parks of Fulbroke, which also belonged to the Lucys, and it may even be that it was at the latter place and not the former that the poaching took place, if at all. Whatever truth there may be in the story there seems little doubt that the poet satirised Sir Thomas Lucy in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" under the guise of "Mr. Justice Shallow."

The village of Charlecote was granted to Walter de Charlecote by Henry de Montfort in the reign of Richard I. In the year 1216 William de Charlecote, son of the original owner, assumed the name of Lucy, by which the family has ever since been known. The present house, which was erected by Sir Thomas Lucy in 1558, probably occupies much the same site as that of the older mansion. With the exception of the dining-room and library, which were added in 1833, Charlecote remains to-day practically as it was in the Elizabethan age. It is approached from the road

through an ancient gate-house, one of the most beautiful and well-preserved specimens of Elizabethan architecture still extant, the upper story of which is supposed to have anciently been used as a banqueting-room.

The house itself is also of red brick with stone dressings, and in the ground plan is very much of the shape of the letter E. The mansion, which is in a beautiful state of preservation throughout, contains the great Hall, a very handsome chamber with a fine bay window, in which are the family arms blazoned in the upper part, and a large number of family portraits by noted artists of different periods, including, amongst others, some fine examples of the work of Cornelis Janssens, Dahl Kneller, De Manara, and Lely. The dining-room, which has a fine panelled plaster ceiling of Elizabethan design, also contains some admirable pictures, and from its windows are charming views of the Avon and the Wellesbourne Brook, and the famous and stately avenue of lime trees.

Charlecote has witnessed several historic scenes, the chief of which are the visit of Queen Elizabeth to Sir Thomas Lucy when on her way from Warwick to Compton Wynyates, August 24, 1572, and the presence in the park of the Scottish Army on its way northward from Hereford on September 9, 1745. Just two hundred years before which date John Fox, the noted martyrologist, came as a guest to Charlecote and remained there for some considerable period. In this house one has an almost unique example of the higher type of purely domestic architecture of the Elizabethan

age, preserved with a success which makes it possible for those who visit it to realise in a measure the needs and ambitions of those spacious days when Elizabeth honoured so many of her noble or distinguished subjects with visits.

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